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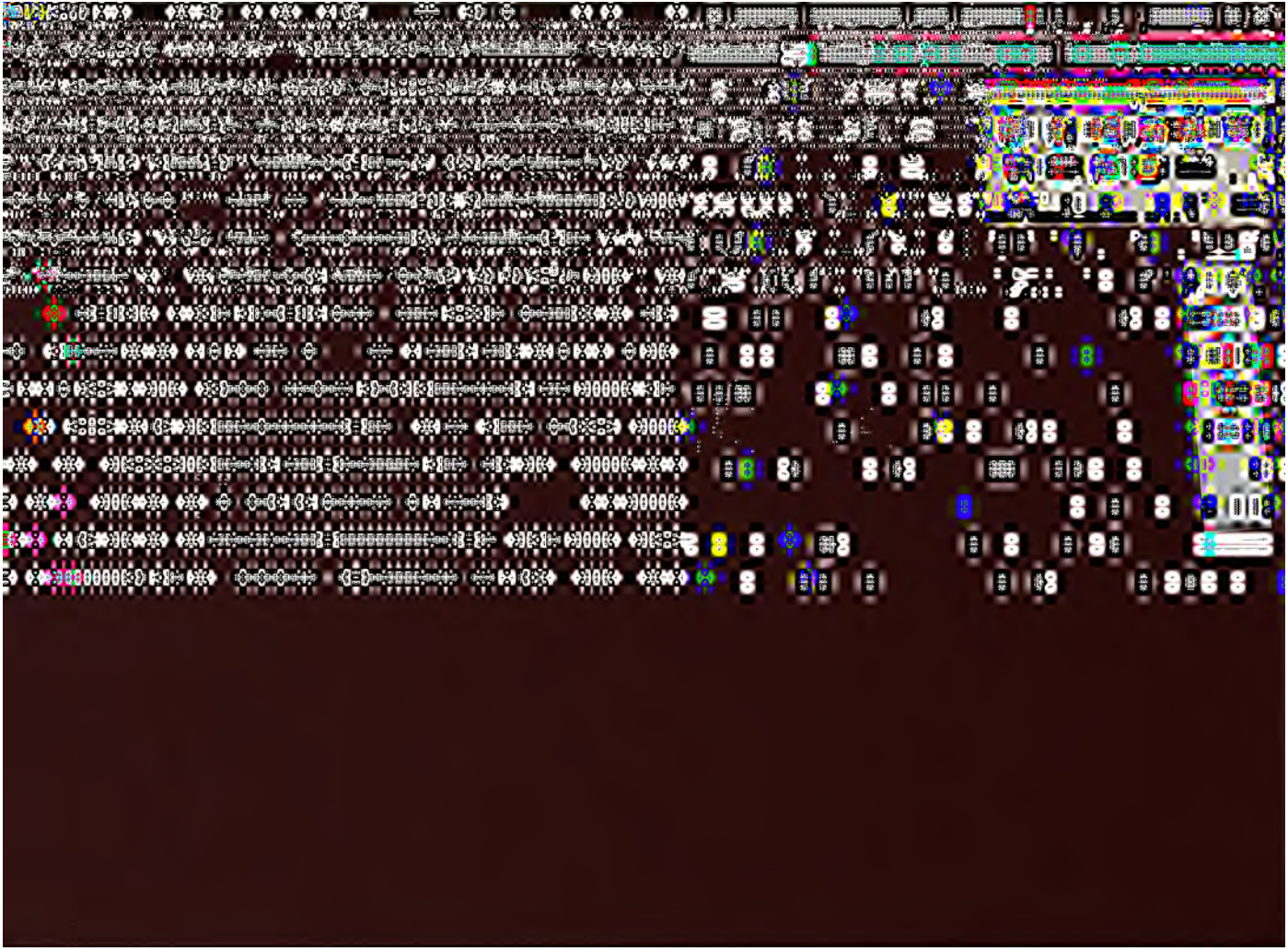

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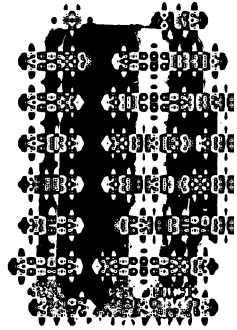

THE DAWN
OF THE
REFORMATION

BY

Herbert B. Workman, M.A.

Vol. I

THE AGE OF WYCLIF

AMS PRESS
NEW YORK

THE DAWN

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REFORMATION

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AUTHOR OF

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VOL. I.

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To my Mother

PREFACE

I HAVE entitled this little work *The Dawn of the Reformation.* My purpose is to trace the various influences and forces both within and without the Church, which produced the great revolution of the sixteenth century. At what hour "dawn" begins is always a matter of dispute, and depends largely on local circumstances. But one thing is certain. A new day has begun long before the average worker has commenced his toil. So with the Reformation. The study of its causes cannot commence with Erasmus or Savonarola; its methods and results were to some extent settled for it in the century before Luther or Cranmer.

My narrow limits have compelled me to omit many things of interest, and to compress into a few lines others which demanded as many pages.

I have constantly realised that to write a small history is more difficult than to write one of larger margins. In what I have included, as well as in what I have omitted, the understanding of the Reformation and its causes has alone had weight. If it be objected that I have given a disproportionate space to Wyclif, or made him bulk larger than he did in his own day, I must plead that his life has scarcely received the attention it deserves. The materials, in fact, for estimating his work and character have but recently become generally available.

Whether or not it is yet possible to form an accurate statement of Wyclif's position may well be doubted. Much work, it seems to me, will yet have to be done before we may know for certain how the Reformer influenced his generation. For instance, I have dwelt somewhat at length upon the Spiritual Franciscans, because I have felt that Wyclif's whole work is saturated with the ideas of this movement. The violence of his language, which has shocked many, is chiefly borrowed from its current polemics. Arnold's most useful *Select English Works of John Wyclif* needs also, in my opinion, a careful

revision. His argument (*Introd.* viii.–xii.) can scarcely be upheld, and vitiates several of his conclusions. That Wyclif's English works will always be a difficulty may readily be acknowledged. But we may reach greater confidence by a careful comparison with his undoubted Latin treatises, as also by a comparison with such works as Purvey's *Remonstrance.* The higher criticism is always dangerous as an historical guide, and I have carefully excluded it from the following pages. Nevertheless, I have a deep suspicion that Wyclif was rather the head and inspiration of a school of workers than himself actually responsible for all that passes, even to-day, under his name. We may acknowledge, however, that to make Wyclif anything like consistent would require a pruning-knife, which would leave very little untouched. His very inconsistencies are not without their use. By reason thereof Wyclif forms, like Constance in the next age, a convenient centre round which to group the various forces of revolt. In him for the most part they find their contradictory expression.

To the critics of my former work, *The Church*

of the West in the Middle Ages, I return thanks for their uniform kindness. One and all have recognised my desire to be absolutely fair. I desire to write neither a panegyric nor a polemic. There are few matters over which the advice is not the wisest—*audi alteram partem.*

Of the many defects of my work I am deeply conscious. But one thing I may plead with confidence. I have no ecclesiastical axe to grind. Nonconformity is not, in my opinion, as some critics would have us understand, altogether a hindrance to historical study. On the one hand, it is true, the Nonconformist loses some degree of sympathy with, and inner understanding of, the life and faith of a church diametrically opposed to his own. On the other hand he gains, or rather should gain, in impartiality by this very detachment. The Anglican historian, however fair, is always liable to the temptation of pointing out the lines of his own growth; his weakness in dealing with the Reformation is his anxiety to prove that there has been no break in continuity. The Nonconformist, on the other hand, should be delivered from this bias. Of his own complete break of continuity, whatever

be the case with the Anglican, he can have no doubt. His polemical contention, that this break is really a reversion to earlier type, should not be allowed to colour his historical examination of how this great break occurred. This, at any-rate, is my ideal—how far I may fall short I must leave to my readers to decide.

I plead indulgence for a task carried on amid many difficulties. To the pressure of a busy pastorate, I must add the difficulty of readily obtaining the necessary books. Visits to the British Museum do not compensate the student in a provincial city for that which he misses at his own door. The sources of English history are generally provided; but beyond that there is a blank in the catalogues that reminds one of the early maps of Africa. As things at present exist, Manchester is the only city in which it is possible for the provincial student to find the sources he needs. This is especially unfortunate for Nonconformity. Our strength lies in provincial centres, where the intelligent study of church history, as distinct from compilation, is almost an impossibility.

A word may be advisable as to the notes and

references. I have taken care to quote the sources of all my important statements. With the present fashion of writing history, especially text-books like the present, without note or comment, I have little sympathy. However inadequate the notes I have supplied, they may at anyrate serve the reader as a guide to future study, and furnish the student with a means of estimating the value of my judgments. In quoting sources I have indicated the editions I have used, and in other ways sought to help the young student. In a few places I have thought it well, for the sake of greater completeness, to refer to works which for various reasons—chiefly because the subject lies outside my immediate purpose—I have not used or verified. *Such references are invariably distinguished by a* †. *The reader should also note that quotations from sources reasonably contemporary with the event in question are enclosed within '. . .' while quotations from later writers are enclosed in the usual " . . ."*

The Index, I may add, is postponed to Volume II.

BIRMINGHAM, 21*st July* 1901.

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Year of Accession.	Popes.	Emperors.	Year of Accession.
1305	Clement v.	Albert i. of Hapsburg	1298
		Henry vii. of Luxembourg	1308
1314	Vacancy	Lewis iv. of Bavaria (Frederick of Austria, rival)	1314
1316	John xxii.		
1334	Benedict xii.		
1342	Clement vi.		
		Charles iv. of Luxembourg (Günther of Schwartzburg, rival)	1347
1352	Innocent vi.		
1362	Urban v.		
1370	Gregory xi.		
1378	Urban vi.	Wenzel of Luxembourg	1378
	(Clement vii., Anti-pope)		
1389	Boniface ix.		
1394	(Benedict, Anti-pope)		

CHAPTER I

AVIGNON

Habent imperia suos terminos; huc cum venerint, sistunt, retrocedunt, ruunt.

§§ 1, 2, and 3. Of the larger church histories for the period of Avignon, the best is MILMAN (ed. 1883, 9 vols.). The great work of GREGOROVIUS, *Rome in the Middle Ages* (trans. Hamilton), is of necessity less valuable than usual,—"Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark," for whom Cola di Rienzo makes a poor substitute. The well-known works of CREIGHTON, *Papacy* (6 vols., 1897), and PASTOR, *The Popes* (great R. C. work; trans. Antrobus; 2nd ed., 6 vols.), have scarcely begun. For readers of French, CHRISTOPHE, *Papauté pendant le xiv. Siècle* (3 vols., 1853), may be mentioned.

§ 4. For the legislation of the fourteenth century, see STUBBS or MAKOWER, *Constitutional History of the Church of England.* Many of the statutes will be found translated in the convenient GEE and HARDY *Documents Illustrative of English Church History.*

§ 5. For the Courts Christian, add MAITLAND, *Canon Law in the Church of England*, cc. 2 and 3.

§ 6. For the condition of the English Church in the fourteenth century, see CAPES, *Hist. of the Eng. Church*, 197–375; cf. also TREVELYAN, *Eng. in the Age of Wyclif*, c. 4.; WYLIE, *Henry IV.*, iii. c. 71. For the effects of the Black Death on regulars and seculars, see GASQUET, *The Great Pestilence* (1893); cf. JESSOPP, *The Black Death in E. Anglia* (*Friars*, cc. 4 and 5).

AVIGNON

I

THE transfer of the Papacy to Avignon marks the beginning of a new era in the history of the Church. "At the present time," writes Renan in his *New Studies*, "nearly all the world is agreed as to the great divisions of the intellectual history of the Middle Ages. Far from casting a uniform shadow, as people often fancy it did, the long night, which extends from the downfall of antique civilisation to the birth of modern civilisation, displays to an attentive eye the clear lines of an intelligible design. The night really only lasted until the eleventh century. Then came a renaissance in philosophy, in poetry, in politics, in art. This renaissance, which dawned in France, culminated in the first half of the thirteenth century, and then stopped. Fanaticism, the narrow spirit of scholasticism, the atrocities of the Dominican Inquisition, the pedantry of the University of Paris, the incapacity of most contemporary

sovereigns, brought about a complete decadence. In all Europe, except Italy, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were stagnant periods during which thought existed no longer, literature was dead, art was dying, and poetry was mute."[1]

Such generalisations are too sweeping. Nevertheless, in the main, the description of the period before us is right. The transfer of the Papacy to Avignon marks the close of all that was brightest and most inspiring in the life of the Medieval Church, and the beginning of a period of decadence and gloom;—the night, as it proved, before the dawn of new forces and new hopes. The destruction by fire in May 1308—the first year of the exile—of the great Lateran Church, the Mother Church of Christendom, was more than an accident; it was rather an epitaph and a prophecy.

The causes of this decay and darkness are not difficult to discover. In the main they were two; the reaction from disappointed hopes, and a deep uncertainty as to wherein lay the path of future progress. If we attempted to describe the ecclesiastical history of the fourteenth century in a phrase, we should describe it as a century of contradictory and abortive efforts at reform standing out against

[1] Renan: *New Studies* (English translation), p. 285.

a background of spiritual fatigue and defeated aspiration. In the present chapter we shall examine this last in detail. Such examination is needful if we would rightly understand the great movements which preceded the Reformation. The revolt of Wyclif and Hus, the failure of the conciliar movement at Constance and Basel, the Mystics crying in the wilderness, the Babylonish Captivity, and the Great Schism can only be comprehended by the student who grasps the world-weariness of the age from which they spring.

For if the thirteenth century is in some respects the most wonderful in history, without doubt the consummation of the Medieval Spirit, the fourteenth—from the second Edward to the burning of Joan of Arc (1431)—is, from the very contrast it presents, one of the most dreary. The thirteenth century unfolds before the student the spectacle of a world that has renewed its youth. Everywhere we see the outburst of enthusiasm. At the commencement of the century St. Francis had pointed a world, weary of the hollow traditions of priestism, back to the simplicity of the gospel; while Dominic had revived the foolishness of preaching. The power of the revival they had begun cannot be exaggerated. The friars had

saved the Latin Church from the ruin that at the close of the twelfth century seemed destined to overwhelm her. Architecture, art, politics had all alike felt the elevating touch of the new enthusiasm. Cities dropped their struggles in arms that they might enter into the new competition, which should build the most stately cathedrals, the spires soaring heavenwards, the most daring domes. In Rhineland and Italy democracy emancipated itself from its fetters and set about the organisation of self-government. In France and England the new consciousness of national unity was manifesting itself in the birth of Parliaments, the enforcement of charters of right, and the curtailment of arbitrary powers, whether in Church or State; while the rapid rise of the new universities and the thousands who flocked to the lecture-rooms of Paris and Oxford witnessed to the intellectual enthusiasm which was sweeping away a contented ignorance. The student of the thirteenth century is conscious everywhere of spring-time. The winter of our discontent is ended; the soul and intellect of man is reawakening from the torpor of the past; before us there would lie, so it might appear, a summer glory, and the full fruition of the early growths.

But this was not to be. The premature

spring gave place to a settled winter. "The third day came a frost, a killing frost," the buds were nipt, the fruit blighted. The youth of the thirteenth century, with its buoyant enthusiasms, its wide sympathies, its dreams and visions, gave place to a premature old age, in which every fire seemed quenched, every emotion and passion burned out. The throb of hope which had pulsed through life died out in inaction or despair. "Material life lingered on, indeed; commerce still widened, but its progress was disassociated from all the nobler elements of national well-being. The towns sank again into close oligarchies, the bondsmen struggling forward into freedom fell back into a serfage which still leaves its trace on the soil. Literature reached its lowest ebb. The religious revival of the Lollards was trodden out in blood, while the Church shrivelled into a self-seeking secular priesthood" (Green). The instincts of political freedom, with which the thirteenth century throbs, disappear in France in centralised despotisms, murdered by a hundred years of blind and foolish war. The republics of Italy become the fiefs of tyrants and the prey of roving adventurers like Hawkwood. In England the new imperialism of Edward III, spelt disaster to the higher interests of the

nation, while medievalism, galvanised into life by Henry V., ended in the struggle of the Roses and the tyranny of the Tudors. Throughout Europe in the fourteenth century violence and disorder crush out peace and progress.

Finally in the Church the great spiritual forces of the past seemed exhausted. The mighty vision of Hildebrand has ended in the gloom of Avignon and the madness of the Schism; the dreams of Saints Francis and Dominic in the hopeless corruption of their orders. No Herlouins or Bernards now make the wilderness blossom as the rose; no Lanfrancs and Anselms turn the forest glade into an international university. Even the enthusiasms of the times, such as they were, have become repellent. In place of the Crusaders or the Little Brothers of Assisi, we see vast processions of Flagellants slowly marching through Europe, with bared shoulders and back, scourging themselves with cords weighted with iron spikes, so lustily laid on that, according to an eye-witness, two jerks were necessary to free the points from the flesh. They taught that this exercise, continued for thirty-three days, would rid the soul of its sin, and restore baptismal purity. In spite of the bulls of Clement VI., the opposition of magistrates, the denunciation of the Mendicants, and

the ceaseless persecution of the Inquisition, bands of Flagellants broke out throughout the century, first in 1349, and attracted to themselves the unbalanced elements among the Lollards, Beghards and Cellites. They gradually developed their crude theories of penance into antisacerdotal heresies of the most uncompromising character. Baptism must be replaced by the blood of the scourge, the Eucharist by flagellation. More dangerous still were their tenets, the result of unrestrained intimacy between the sexes, that matrimony defiled marriage, and that any sin could afterwards be expiated by stripes. But the Flagellants were respectable when compared with the Dancers, who in 1373 and 1374 poured from Rhineland into Flanders, dancing and singing until they fell to the earth in convulsions, then planning how to slay the canons and clergy of Liège. Madmen in all ages have mistaken the deliriums of their hearts for divine promptings, but the number and popularity of the Flagellants witness to the consciousness among the people that the Church no longer satisfied their desires for self-surrender. We mark also that the outbreak of the Dancers was commonly attributed to defective baptism, caused by the universal practice among the priests of keeping concubines.

Flagellants and Dancers were signs of the

times. They would have been impossible in an age of spiritual life. Ignorance abounded: in England, according to the Lollard Thorpe, out of every twenty men or women there were not three 'who know surely a commandment of God, or could say their *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria*, or *Credo* readily in every manner of language.' Crime prevailed: in Flanders, according to one of its annalists, in the territory of Ghent alone, there were, in ten months of 1379, no less than fourteen hundred murders.[1] "The period was in many ways a most melancholy one"—we quote the verdict of the great Roman historian Dr. Pastor—"The prevailing immorality exceeded anything that had been witnessed since the tenth century. . . . Habits of life changed rapidly, and became more luxurious and pleasure-seeking. The clergy of all degrees, with some honourable exceptions, went with the current. . . . Gold became the ruling power everywhere. Even permission to receive holy orders had to be purchased by presents." We need not wonder that, under such conditions, "unbridled immorality kept pace with the increasing luxury of the age," or be astonished "at the decay of discipline in the matter of the celibacy of the clergy."[2] Con-

[1] Lea, *Inquis.*, iii. 642.

[2] Pastor, i. 97, 98, who refers to Schwab's *Gerson*, 38, 39.

tinence in high ecclesiastics had become a rare virtue, as we may see from the emphasis laid upon it in the case of "Saint" Archbp. Scrope.[1] Even literature drifted back towards heathen models. The most celebrated work of the age, Boccaccio's *Decameron*, may find the explanation, but not the excuse, of its brilliant licentiousness in the prevailing immorality. When Frederic of Trinacria wrote to his brother, Jayme II. of Aragon (1305), to tell him, in confidence, of his doubts whether Christianity was a divine revelation, he gave three reasons. The first was the public wickedness of the seculars, especially of bishops and abbots; the second, the morals of the Mendicants; and the third, the negligence and worldliness of the Holy See.[2] He might have added a fourth: that the Inquisition had crushed out aspiration, and taught men that safety lay in mechanical conformity and indifference to corruption.

II

The student to-day can scarcely realise the feelings with which thoughtful men in the fourteenth century contemplated the manifest downfall of the Papacy. The world was conscious of a lost

[1] Wylie, *Henry IV.*, ii. 202.
[2] Lea, *Inquis.*, iii. 631–2.

something, she scarcely knew what. In reality, Europe had lost her centre of balance, and was groping blindly for a substitute. Adequately to understand, we must remember all that the Holy See represented to the Middle Ages. For nearly eight hundred years Rome had stood, not merely for righteousness, but solidarity. Her bishops were not only the vicars of God; they were the symbols and source of a brotherhood that would otherwise have perished. Men remembered their services in the past; how they had tamed the barbarians, enforced law upon the lawless, preached the subordination of the individual to society, curbed the lust and despotism of kings, held up ideals of purity and truth in the darkest ages, saved the Church from the triumph of the Cathari, maintained a unity of faith and hope in the days when all creed was in danger of disintegration. That some of these services were imaginary, that others had been accomplished by other agents, whose labours Rome had oftentimes appropriated, lessened neither the belief of the age in their reality nor the gratitude of the pious. That the claims of the Papacy were unjustifiable in origin, impossible of execution, did not appeal to a generation that was neither historical nor critical. Enlightened thinkers brushed aside such arguments as irrelevant, or fell back for their

justification upon the beneficial uses to which the Papal power had been put by the better pontiffs.

Nowhere do we find a better illustration of this feeling than in the pages of the great thinker who embodies most fully the hope and despair of the early fourteenth century. No writer had shown himself more conscious of the failure and shame of Rome, the cupidity of its Curia, than Dante. In canto after canto he pours out his indignation, consigning popes to hell for their misdeeds, and meting out judgment with the fearlessness of a modern. But let not the reader be deceived into imagining that Dante was a Protestant. To the great poet, Rome is still the centre of faith, the heart of the Church, the hope of the world. Even a Boniface VIII., whom he hates, is the undoubted vicar of God. He would correct, not destroy; reform, not sweep away. His anger is terrible, but it is anger which wails over a lost ideal—anger such as the Psalmist felt when by the waters of Babylon he thought of his ruined Jerusalem. For him the Roman Church is still the Bride of Christ; though, alas! the bridal veil is rent, the orange flower faded. She who should be the spotless maiden is sold into the world. Dante's poem is the broken-hearted cry of one who mourns and refuses to be comforted. The present weighs on

him like a nightmare; he looks into the future, but not with the eyes of a prophet. He sees not the cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, which shall yet be big with blessing. He is conscious of no new forces, no new ideals of progress. For him all hope lies in the restoration of the past: his golden age is in the days before 'avarice o'ercast the world with mourning':

> Ah, Constantine! to how much ill gave birth,
> Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower
> Which the first wealthy Father gained from thee![1]

His face, like that of his age, is turned toward the setting sun; he has heard no cry of the watchman heralding in the new dawn. He fails to discern that the great institutions of the Middle Ages—the Empire, the Papacy, Monasticism—are but stages in the progress of humanity, not finalities in themselves.

If from the despair of Europe at the downfall of the Papacy we turn to its causes, we shall see in their diversity the reason for the bewilderment of men with regard to the future. Every doctor who diagnosed the disease was not less certain as to the efficacy of his own remedy than positive in his refusal to adopt the methods of his rivals. As to the causes of downfall there was wonderful unanimity. By her vaulting ambition Rome

[1] *Inferno*, xix. 118. Read the whole canto.

had overreached herself. By her destruction of the Empire she had overturned the theoretical basis upon which her power rested. By her impossible claims, her ceaseless exactions, her arrogant usurpations, she had estranged the sympathies of Europe. Her downfall was complete when a French pope made the Holy See into a dependence of a French king. Pretensions that men might have borne when made at Rome became intolerable when put forth by a Papacy that had ceased to be a universal sovereign power—that had sunk into the department of one state amid a group of rising nations.

But when men attempted the cure we see at once hopeless divergence. Grosseteste, if we may take an illustration from the previous century, would have been satisfied with financial reform and stricter discipline. He scouted that idea of a national Church, so dear to Gerson and the Gallican bishops. Dante pleads for the restoration of vanished ideals and the reconstruction of ruins. The cure which he advocates for the world's woe was the re-establishment of the Ghibelline Utopia; Empire and Papacy once more the joint lights that shall rule the day and night; the world-empire the panacea for the world's fatigue. For him the extinction of the Empire is as inconceivable as the extinction of

III

We have already glanced at the causes of the downfall of the Papacy. They demand, however, fuller analysis; for the reforms and revolts of the fourteenth century eddy and swirl round these different stones of offence.

We place first, as first in the order of development, the destruction by the Papacy of the Empire. The thirteenth century had witnessed the virtual overthrow by the popes of the most venerable institution in the world, the Holy Roman Empire. This victory of Rome over the Hohenstaufen, dazzling and complete though it seemed at the time, was not less disastrous in the long run for the Papacy itself. For the strength of Empire and Papacy lay in a common centripetal and universal idea, whose hold upon the thought of Europe was not the less profound because indefinite and illogical. By the destruction of her rival, Rome had undermined her own foundations. The central idea of the solidarity of Europe, upon which she rested for her strength, was shattered. The new nationalism stepped into the vacant place. While the popes had been busy reducing the Empire to a shadow, the Capets from ciphers had become realities, and England a consolidated monarchy. So long as

the Empire existed, the new nationalism had hesitated to attack the Papacy. But with the fall of the Hohenstaufen, Rome was left face to face with her new and greater foe. The kingdoms of Western Europe could now challenge the root ideas of papal power. This they were not slow to do. Throughout the fourteenth century we behold the new nationalism examine and check papal pretensions hitherto unchallenged. The religious reformation of the sixteenth century was preceded by a political revolt, a protest against an all-centralised yet omnipresent world-power, in theory spiritual, in practice secular, which had outlived the conditions of its birth. The imperial idea, which originated with Alexander, but was completed by the Cæsars, was at last exhausted. World-wide administrative centralisation, whether secular or spiritual, had ceased to be the ideal. "The building up of the nation had begun to be revealed as the goal of history."[1]

The overthrow of the Empire appealed to conservative thinkers like Dante; its effect on the crowd, at anyrate in England, would be but slight. But the removal of the Papacy from

[1] Allen, *Christian Institutions*, 225. The whole of cc. x. and xi. are worth reading for their emphasis of "nationality"; as also Church, *Influence of Christianity upon National Character*. Mulford, *The Nation*, is very prolix.

Rome to Avignon struck at the deepest convictions of the learned and the vulgar. Little as they might understand the dogma of the unbroken continuity of the imperial idea, all men still lay under the spell of the name of Rome. To scholar and peasant Rome was still the world's capital, the source and centre of that unity with the past upon which the medieval world rested. More far-seeing than the cardinals, men could not understand how the Papacy could rest content to have broken with more than a thousand years of history or allow herself to be contemplated as a thing apart from the mysterious source of her greatness. With absentee bishops all men were acquainted, but an absentee Bishop of Rome was a contradiction in ideas; for the centre to shift from the centre and yet continue the centre, an impossibility. No martyrs had consecrated the stones of Avignon, no apostles had founded its Church. For the traveller its sole interest lies in its Palace of the Popes, in itself a symbol or history written in stone. This gigantic pile, with its huge square towers, its yellowish brown colossal walls, five yards in thickness, "reflects in its strange combination of castle and cloister, prison and palace, the deterioration and the fate of the Papacy in France."[1] Hard by is the

[1] Pastor, i. 85.

cathedral, in itself massive, but by contrast insignificant. The spiritual element in the Holy See had become secondary in Avignon to the worldly and warlike, its historical purpose and evolution were forgotten. The Papacy had abandoned the rock from which it had been hewn, the pit from which it was digged.

The false position of the popes at Avignon, was accentuated by the looseness of their lives and the corruption of their courts. To Petrarch Avignon is not a city, but a den of spectres and goblins, the common sink of all vices, 'false, guilt-laden Babylon, the forge of lies, the horrible prison, the hell upon earth.' All the tales that he had read of Assyria or Egypt become fables by comparison with the actual vices of the abode of the vicar of Christ. A deluge only can sweep away its abominations; but, alas, there would be no Noah to survive it. One of the cardinals, he allows, is a man of nobler soul, had he not belonged to the Sacred College. Petrarch, we are told, is merely speaking "as a poet and as a fiery and enthusiastic Roman patriot."[1] Some deduction, we allow, must be made for the exaggeration—perhaps the spleen—of this disappointed or wronged Italian. Petrarch certainly

[1] Pastor, i. 65, 66.

displayed as much reluctance as Lot to escape from his Sodom.

But the evidence against Avignon is too complete and cumulative. The lasciviousness of Clement VI. was the common gossip of Europe. We can still read the story in the annals of a far-off Yorkshire abbey.[1] When his cardinals remonstrated: 'What we have done,' he replied, 'we have only done on the advice of our doctors.' Thereupon he produced a 'little black book, in which he had caused to be written the names of his predecessors which were incontinent, and showed by their deeds that they had ruled the Church better than the continent.' Abbot Burton may have slandered His Holiness; that he could write this tale and others of the same order in his *Chronicles* is evidence, at any-rate, of popular feeling. We also read of a letter affixed in 1351 to the doors of the churches in Avignon. The writer, the Prince of Darkness, saluted, from the centre of hell, his vicar, the Pope, and his servants the cardinals, by whose assistance he had overcome Christ. He sent them the good wishes of their mother and sisters, Pride, Avarice, and Lust.[2] Boccaccio was not far wrong in his biting sarcasm. In

[1] *Chronicles Melsa* (Meaux, near Beverley) (R.S.), iii. 89.
[2] Lea, *Inquis.*, iii. 633.

one of his tales he tell us of a Jew who, when he saw Avignon was converted to Christianity: This religion, he argued, must be of God, seeing that it spreads and flourishes in spite of the wickedness of its head.

We have other evidence more damaging than that of poets, satirists, or gossiping monks. After her sojourn at Avignon in 1376, St. Catherine loudly complains that at the Papal Court, which ought to have been a paradise of virtue, her nostrils were assailed by the odours of hell.[1] St. Briget of Sweden, writing to Gregory XI. tells him that 'a brothel is now more respected than the Church!' Nothing that Wyclif ever said of the wickedness of the clergy exceeds in bitterness her denunciation, while her revelations were officially ascribed to the Holy Ghost. If it is pleaded that these prophetesses were somewhat hysterical, the same cannot be said of Alvaro Pelayo. No canonist of Avignon was more zealous in his defence of the claims of the Papacy. He even maintained that the famous donation of Constantine was but the restoration of that which had been violently usurped from its legitimate owner.[2] The orthodoxy of this Franciscan is beyond suspicion; he was not even a Spiritual. In his

[1] Pastor, i. 107. [2] Poole, *Med. Thought*, 250.

Wailing of the Church, Avignon stands for ever self-condemned.[1]

In another respect also the transfer of the Holy See from its historic home was disastrous to its influence. In the theory of Hildebrand and Innocent, the Papacy was the supreme tribunal of Christendom, bound, as the regent of God, to protect the rights of all, and hold the scales evenly between the governors and the governed in a vast theocratic empire. No state had accepted this theory; nevertheless in practice it had proved itself a potent reality, acted on by Europe almost without question. But the theory presupposes the freedom and independence of this court of appeal; its working was impossible if one nation, caring nothing for the universal interests of the Church, intent only on its own advantage, should obtain exclusive possession of the supreme spiritual authority. At Avignon the Papacy, separated only by the breadth of the Rhone from the territories of the French king, became the creature of France,—"French court bishops," as the historian Hase calls them, with pardonable exaggeration.[2] Frenchmen themselves, and surrounded by a college of cardinals in which the French element predominated, they gave a French character to the government of

[1] See Appendix A. [2] Cf. Dante, *Inf.*, xix. 91.

the Church. The universality of the Papacy, as the common tribunal—the court of first instance—of all nations, in no small degree the secret of the influence of the medieval popes, became a thing of the past. This universality, lost at Avignon, the Papacy has never recovered, not even in the lesser matter of the election of her popes. Rather than restore the international character of the Holy See, the French cardinals in 1378 plunged Europe and the Church into the greatest and most fatal of her schisms. The result was the defeat of the French, but not the restoration of the old internationalism. From Constance onwards, the Papacy has been an Italian institution, to which no foreigner can hope to aspire.

The supreme spiritual court could not become French without arousing in other nations suspicion and antagonism. For France in the opening years of the fourteenth as of the nineteenth centuries was accused, not without justice, of aiming at universal monarchy, of desiring to step into the place so long held in theory, though not in practice, by the Holy Roman Empire. Never, in fact—not even in the days of Napoleon—was Europe in greater peril of falling under the dominion or overlordship of one house. Her rapid acquisitions of territory,

whether at the expense of England, or, as in the case of the great city of Lyons,[1] at the expense of the Empire, were the outer signs only of a greater danger. A French dynasty sat on the throne of Naples and Sicily, and held Italy at their mercy. French princes had become the Kings of Hungary. A French candidate, Charles of Valois, offered himself for the Empire, vacant by the murder of Albert of Hapsburg (May 1308). The one service which Clement v. rendered to Europe was his circumvention, in spite of all the efforts of Philip, of this crowning ambition of France, and his securing the election of the noble though powerless Henry of Luxembourg. For once the Pope became a Ghibelline, in spite of immemorial policy and traditions.

How great was this danger of universal French dominion may be seen in a remarkable treatise written in 1300 by a certain royal advocate in Normandy, Peter du Bois.[2] The author lays down in the plainest terms that the best thing that could happen to society

[1] Let me remind the reader never to read history with modern maps. A good cheap historical atlas, marvellous value for the money, is Putzger's *Historischer Schul-Atlas* (24th Ed. Leipzig). Freeman, Spruner-Menke, and the new Clarendon Press Atlas are costly.

[2] Poole, *Med. Thought*, 257–60.

would be that it should become universally subject to Paris,—'Rome, Tuscany, the coasts and the mountains, Sicily, England, Aragon, and all the other countries,' which formed the empire of Constantine, and, therefore, by the famous Donation, the patrimony of the Papacy, should be handed over to the French King, in exchange for an adequate pension to the Pope, their present sovereign. By the transfer to Avignon the project seemed to have taken the first step towards accomplishment.

Antagonism and suspicion of Avignon and its influences was natural for all, but was especially bound to be the case with England; for the transfer of the Papacy to Avignon coincided with the breaking out of the hundred years' war between England and France. Veneration for the Holy See gave place to a growing irritation as men realised that the rulers of the Church were French by race, French in their sympathies, and inclined to lend the French King the use of their spiritual resources as weapons of war. The French cardinals, complained the Commons in 1376, are our enemies, almost to a man. How close were the relations of the popes at Avignon with the enemies of England is shown by the sums of money which Clement VI. and his brother

lent to the French kings and barons during the great war. "Between 1345 and 1350 Philip VI. received 592,000 golden florins, and 5000 scudi, and John V. the enormous sum of 3,517,000, florins."[1] Resentment was natural. The steady drain of English gold carried over seas to support a court of French cardinals and priests was bad enough; it became intolerable when used for the support of our foes.

IV

This last abuse was more fatal to the Papacy than any other. Europe groaned under a financial extortion as insatiate as it was shameless. 'The Church is pale,' wailed St. Catherine, 'through loss of blood drained from her by insatiable devourers.'[2] This extortion was no new thing. We see its steady growth throughout the thirteenth century, culminating in the scandals and rapacities of the fourteenth. The system was so infamous, its consequences so important that we shall do well to illustrate its growth at length in the case of England.

[1] Pastor, i. 92 n. The gold florin was worth 16s. For a convenient table of foreign moneys in the fourteenth century, see Wylie, *Henry the Fourth* (1896), iv., App. T. They must, of course, be multiplied by from 20 to 25 to get the modern purchasing value.

[2] Pastor, i. 105.

Throughout the thirteenth century the Papacy had used England as a milch cow. In 1229 Gregory IX. had claimed a tenth of all movables from both clergy and laity. Ten years later he secured the fifth of all ecclesiastical revenues. The demands rose with obedience. In 1244 Innocent IV. despatched his chamberlain, Martin, as nuncio to England, with more than legatine powers, to demand thirty thousand marks for his struggle with Frederic II.[1] In 1246 he further demanded from all the beneficed clergy a third of their revenues for three years, and in the case of Italians and non-residents one-half.[2] Such taxation, it might be pleaded, was but temporary, grants to meet the special emergencies of the life-and-death struggle of the Empire. Grosseteste himself, though disliking the form in which the demands were made, seems to have felt that the objects were necessary, and even to have taken a leading part in obtaining funds.[3] A more constant and irritating source of income was found in the system of annats. In 1256 Alexander IV. had claimed the firstfruits of all bishoprics and benefices, a demand renewed by Clement V. in

[1] *Hist. Maj.*, iv. 368.
[2] *Hist. Maj.*, iv. 580; Bliss, *Calendar*, i. 235.
[3] Stevenson, *Robert Grosseteste*, 252.

1306. In the fourteenth century this became fixed in a system.

But the most grievous of papal extortions—the most disastrous, certainly, in its consequences—was the method of "provisions," by which the revenues of the most valuable benefices found their way into the hands of non-resident courtiers at Rome or Avignon. This famous infamy would seem to have been begun by Gregory IX.[1] In 1240 we find him requiring Grosseteste and the Bishop of Salisbury to find benefices in their dioceses for three hundred Romans, the allegiance of whose friends he wished to retain in his struggle with Frederick II. He further prohibited them from giving away any benefices until his own requirements were satisfied. The demand soon developed into a regular system. In 1252 Grosseteste, who 'hated like the poison of snakes dishonest Romans who had the Pope's precept for a provision,'[2] caused inquiry to be made, that he might estimate the revenues sent abroad to these alien beneficiaries. 'It was ascertained,' continues Matthew of Paris, 'that the present Pope, Innocent IV., had impoverished the universal Church more than all his predecessors had done from the time of the establishment of the Papacy; and the incomes of the foreign clerks appointed

[1] *Hist. Maj.*, iv. 31. [2] *Hist. Maj.*, v. 257.

by him in England, whom the Roman Church had enriched, amounted to more than 70,000 marks. The clear revenue of the King did not amount to one-third of this.'[1]

This estimate of Matthew of Paris has been considered an exaggeration. But figures have been preserved for a century later (1377) which give us an indication of the magnitude of the evil. Of archdeacons in English dioceses the proportion of aliens to natives was one in three; of prebendal stalls, one in sixteen. "In some dioceses the number of rectories in foreign hands was considerable, while in the west of England there were very few." But among friars and abbots the proportion of aliens was very great.[2] "At Salisbury in 1326 the dean, the precentor, the treasurer, two archdeacons, and twenty-three prebendaries were papal nominees, and no less than eight were waiting with the right of succession to prebends as they became void."[3] England was indeed, as Innocent IV. called it, 'a garden of delights, a well that never failed.'[4] But men, of whom even the bishops complained (1318) that they knew not 'the bleating of the flock,' ate the fat and drunk of the deep waters.

The removal of the Papacy from Rome added

[1] *Hist. Maj.*, v. 355.
[2] Trevelyan, 119, 360 n.
[3] Capes, *op. cit.* 86.
[4] *Hist. Maj.*, iv. 547.

to the evil. The greed of Avignon knew no bounds. With the loss of the income which they had drawn from Italy, the popes were driven back upon annats, reservations, and expectancies. 'Whenever I entered the chambers of the ecclesiastics of the Papal Court,' writes Alvaro Pelayo, a papal official himself, 'I found brokers and clergy engaged in weighing and reckoning the money which lay in heaps before them.' 'My predecessors did not know how to be popes,' laughed Clement VI. when his financial exactions were brought to his notice. But in this Clement did his predecessors an injustice. The first of the French popes, Clement V., had bequeathed 300,000 golden florins to his nephew, a sum which would have been larger had he not drained his wealth by sensual prodigality. His successor, John XXII., another Gascon from Cahors, was a worthy native of a city famous throughout the Middle Ages for its usurers. With his repudiation of apostolic poverty we shall deal later; his life, at anyrate, was consistent with his doctrine. At his death a banker, Villani, the brother of the historian of Florence, was ordered to take the inventory of his hoard. It amounted to eighteen millions of gold florins in specie, and seven millions in plate and jewels. 'The good man,' satirically adds Villani, 'had

forgotten the saying, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth"; but perhaps he intended this wealth for the recovery of the Holy Land.' One source of his wealth was notorious. He reserved to himself all benefices vacated by promotion made by the Pope, and afterwards extended the reservation, under the pretext of discouraging simony, to all collegiate benefices.

In his famous bull *Execrabilis* (November 1317), the cunning greed of John discovered a new source of income. Under the pretext of doing away with pluralities, the Pope commanded all pluralists with cure of souls to choose within one month one, and one only, of their benefices, the cardinals alone being exempted. The rest were to be surrendered to himself, that so 'the vine of the Lord, which was bringing forth wild grapes, might bear sweet fruit.' The penalty for neglect of obedience was, *ipso jure*, deprivation of all. By this measure John reaped, we are told, 'a countless store of treasure.' This we may well believe, for the benefices that fell into his hands were so numerous that for some years he found it a difficult task to fill them up with his friends. In England alone in the summer of 1318 fifty benefices fell into his hands.[1] By a

[1] Bliss, *Calendar Papal Letters*, ii. 171–82. The bull *Execrabilis* has become, in a curious, roundabout way, part of

skilful promotion from bishopric to bishopric he contrived that annats or firstfruits should be paid several times over within a brief period.

His successor, Benedict XII., strove in vain to do away with the abuses of nepotism and corruption. 'A pope,' he said, 'should be like Melchisedek,—without father, without mother, without genealogy.' He was followed by Clement VI. who returned like a dog to his vomit, shamelessly acknowledging, as we have seen, his pre-eminence in extortion. He was Pope, he said, to promote the happiness of his subjects; and his cheerful prodigality soon exhausted the hoards of John. An eye-witness declared that a hundred thousand poor clergy flocked to Avignon to partake of his bounty. To satisfy these leeches, and to finish the great Palace of the Popes, he was forced to invent new modes of exaction. His policy was followed by Boniface IX. Dietrich of Niem, the historian and eye-witness of the Schism, for thirty-five years a papal official, tells us that when Boniface found himself in want of money with which to pay his troopers, he suddenly deposed nearly all the prelates who chanced to be at his court, together with many who were

the law of England. See Maitland, *Canon Law in C.E.*, c. v., '*Execrabilis*' *in the Common Pleas*, for the clever way in which the Crown appropriated this bull to itself.

absent, translated some to titular sees, and sold their vacant places to the highest bidder.[1]

The oppression of Avignon finance is written in the annals of the age. In one of the desponding letters of his later years, the reforming Archbishop Peckham (1279–1292) hinted his fears lest the Papacy should betray for a platter full of coins the vital interests of the Church. His fears were justified. Nothing, in fact, that the Papacy had done or left undone contributed more to the undermining of its authority and the growing alienation of all classes. Throughout the Middle Ages simony was the corroding cancer of the Church. Sacraments, benefices, dispensations, indulgences were all alike sold in open market by men, whose sole object was the amassing of gold. But all eyes instinctively turned to the Holy See as the fountain of the evil. We see this both in the decrees of the mighty and the satires of the poor. In a curious parody of the thirteenth century we read:—

> Here beginneth the Gospel according to the Silver Marks:
>
> In those days the Pope said unto the Romans: When the Son of Man shall come to the throne of our majesty, first say to him: Friend, why comest thou?
>
> And if he continue to knock, giving you nothing, ye shall cast him into outer darkness.

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[1] Niem, *De Schmismate*, ii. c. xiv. For his life and writings see Creighton, i. 365–8.

And it came to pass that a certain poor clerk came to the court of the Lord Pope, and cried out saying:

Have mercy on me, ye gatekeepers of the Pope, for the hand of poverty hath touched me. I am poor and hungry, I pray you to help my misery.

Then were they wroth, and said: Friend, thy poverty perish with thee. Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou knowest not the odour of money.

Verily, verily I say unto you, that thou shalt not enter into the joy of thy Lord until thou hast given the last farthing.

Then the poor man went out and sold his cloak and his coat and all that he had, and gave it to the cardinals and gatekeepers and chamberlains.

But they said: What is this among so many?

And they cast him beyond the gate, and he wept bitterly, and could find none to comfort him.

Then came there to the court a rich clerk, fat and broad and heavy, who in his wrath had slain a man.

First he gave to the gatekeeper, then to the chamberlain, then to the cardinals, and they thought they were about to receive more.

But the Lord Pope, hearing that the cardinals and servants had many gifts from the clerk, fell sick unto death.

Then unto him the rich man sent an electuary of gold and silver, and straightway he was cured.

Then the Lord Pope called unto him the cardinals and servants, and said unto them:

Brethren, take heed that no one seduce you with empty words. I set you an example: Even as I take, so shall ye take.[1]

Dissatisfaction was not limited to the satires of the vulgar. In 1372 we find the monas-

[1] Lea, *Inquisition in M. A.*, iii. 624–5, from *Carmina Burana* (†) (Breslau, 1883), pp. 22–3.

teries of Rhineland entering into a compact to resist the levy proposed by Gregory XI. of a tithe on their revenues. 'In consequence,' we read, 'of the exactions with which the Papal Court burdens the clergy, the Apostolic See has fallen into such contempt that the Catholic faith in these parts seems to be seriously imperilled. The laity speak slightingly of the Church, because, departing from the custom of former days, she hardly ever sends forth preachers or reformers, but rather ostentatious men, cunning, selfish and greedy. Things have come to such a pass that few are Christians more than in name.' In Bavaria in 1367 Duke Stephen enjoined the clergy, 'under severe penalties, to pay no tax or tribute to the Pope, for their country is a free country.'[1]

Nowhere was revolt more marked than in England; nowhere, we may add, was it more needed. On all sides it was felt that the aggressions and extortions of the Papacy must be checked. In the passionate invective of the so-called Monk of Malmesbury we hear the voice of a nation: 'Of all the lands on earth it is England alone that feels the burden of its papal lord. His legates come and strip us bare. Others armed with his credentials demand our prebends.

[1] Pastor, i. 91–2.

Rules of residence are abolished for one dean. Canons are rarely to be seen. Lord Jesus, remove the Pope from off our backs, or curb his power!'

The student of the Reformation would do well to realise how persistent and continuous in England in the fourteenth century were the efforts of all classes 'to remove the popes from off their backs' and 'to curb his power.' In some respects the sixteenth century but took up the work that in the fifteenth century was interrupted by the "spirited foreign policy" of Henry V. and the disastrous struggle of the Roses. The forerunner of revolt was a churchman, the most illustrious of medieval bishops, the famous Grosseteste. In his 'sharp epistle'[1] to 'Master Innocent' — the representative of Innocent IV. in England—Grosseteste respectfully but firmly refused to 'provide' any prebend in Lincoln for the Pope's nephew, Frederic de Lavagna, Jan. 26, 1253, a demand, adds the monk of Burton, 'hateful to God and man.'

'It will be known to your Holiness,' he wrote, 'that I am ready to obey apostolical commands with filial affection, and with all devotion and reverence, but to those things which are opposed to apostolical commands, I, in my zeal for the honour of my parent, am also opposed. By apostolical commands are meant those

[1] 'Satis tonantem,' Higden, viii. 240 (Trevisa) 241.

which are agreeable to the teaching of the apostles and of Christ Himself, the Lord and Master of the apostles, whose type and representation is specially borne in the ecclesiastical hierarchy by the Pope. The letter above mentioned is not consonant with apostolical sanctity, but utterly at variance and discord with it.'

Grosseteste proceeds to argue that no sin can be worse than for the shepherds to provide for their own carnal desires from the milk and wool of Christ's sheep, and yet by neglect of their pastoral duties bring loss and destruction on the flock. Therefore, 'out of filial reverence,' he is prepared to 'disobey, resist, and rebel.' 'The holiness of the Apostolic See,' he concludes, 'can only tend to edification, and not to destruction; for the plenitude of its power consists in its being able to do all things for edification. These "provisions," however, as they are called, are not for edification, but for manifest destruction. They are not, therefore, within the power of the Apostolic See. They owe their inspiration to flesh and blood, which shall not inherit the kingdom of God.'[1]

This fearless censure of Grosseteste, written, as his friend Adam Marsh claims, 'with so much prudence, eloquence, and vigour, shall, by the aid

[1] This letter was often copied. *Hist. Mag.*, v. 389–92; *Mon. Francis.*, 382–5; Brown, *Fasciculus*, 400; Luard, *Epistles*, 432; *Annals of Burton* (R.S. 36), i. 311–33, 436–8. It is reproduced by Wyclif, with a commentary, *De Civ. Dom.*, i. c. 43.

of God, benefit all ages to come.'[1] Its immediate influence, it is true, was slight. 'Who is this raving old man,' cried Innocent in a passion,—'this deaf and foolish dotard, who in his audacity judges my actions? By St. Peter and St. Paul, if we were not restrained by our generosity, we would make him an astonishment and warning to the world. Is not the King of England our vassal—rather our slave?' With difficulty the cardinals prevented Innocent IV. from excommunicating him. 'We cannot condemn him,' they argued. 'He is a Catholic, yea, and most holy,—even stricter in his religious observances than we are; and, indeed, he is believed to have no equal among all prelates.'[2] They also urged that Grosseteste's 'death could not be far distant.'[3] In a few months their anticipations or wishes were fulfilled (Oct. 9). 'The Church will not be freed from her Egyptian bondage except at the point of the blood-stained sword,' murmured the dying saint,[4] 'uttering his words with difficulty, and amid sighs and tears.' 'These evils,' he added, 'of which I have spoken are but slight

[1] *Mon. Francis.*, i. 325.

[2] *Hist. Maj.*, v. 393. Doubtless Matthew of Paris indulges in rhetoric, and makes speeches after the manner of the ancients.

[3] Stevenson, 313 n. 5.

[4] *Ibid.* 316 n., 323. Date, Oct. 9, 1253 (Luard, lxxxiii. n.)

as compared with those which will come in a short time,—perhaps within three years.'[1] His prophecy found its fulfilment in the greater exactions of Avignon and the rise in the next century of a new national party, Parliament and people united in resistance to the claims of Rome.

Two objects in special the national party set before themselves. The one was the repudiation of the shame of John; the other, the reform of the financial oppression of the Curia. The first was easily attained. King, Parliament, and Church alike united in getting rid of their fetters. In 1301 the Parliament of Lincoln repudiated 'the marvellous and unheard of' pretensions of Boniface VIII. to the over-lordship of Scotland; Winchelsea, the Archbishop, alone withholding his name from the national protest.[2] The tribute and claims to homage were for a while quietly dropped by popes too wise or too weak to enforce the demands of an Innocent. But the reform of the financial oppression of the Curia was not so easily procured. The interests of the King, as we shall see, lay in an alliance with the Pope to defeat the law.

All through the fourteenth century we are conscious of the deep-seated discontent of the

[1] *Hist. Maj.*, v. 402–7.

[2] Translated in Gee and Hardy, 89–91.

people, not merely with papal extortion, but with clerical wealth and power. The mere record of Parliamentary action is in itself eloquent of new movements and forces. In the reign of Edward I., almost before Parliament had a regular existence, the statute of Mortmain (*De Religiosis*, 1279) crippled the religious corporations in their acquisition of land,[1] while in 1285 the King's writ, *Circumspecte Agatis*,[2] checked the claims of the ecclesiastical courts, and confined their jurisdiction to 'those things which are mostly spiritual.' In 1307, at the Parliament of Carlisle, a document passed from hand to hand, which led to the blazing out of the smouldering fires. With high-flown rhetoric, it compared the Pope to the Assyrian who wasted the temple of God and carried off the vessels of gold. The document ended with an appeal to kings and nobles to rise up and resist the aggression of the spoiler. Parliament replied by prohibiting any 'religious person, of whatsoever condition or state,' to carry abroad 'any rent, tallage, or any kind of imposition.'[3]

[1] Trans. in Gee and Hardy, 81–2.

[2] *Ibid.* 83–5; cf. the *Articuli Cleri* of 1316, *ibid.* 96–102, and Stubbs, ii. 354.

[3] Gee and Hardy, 92–5.

In the confusion and anarchy of the reign of Edward II. nothing was done. But with the accession of Edward III. the national party once more renewed its resistance to pretentions or abuse. In 1343 a grave remonstrance was drawn up by the Lords and Commons, to be carried to Avignon by Sir John Shoreditch, a baron of the Exchequer. Aliens, who knew neither the peoples' tongue nor mode of life, had been intruded by the popes, to the chilling of devotion and the peril of men's souls. They therefore begged Clement VI. to withdraw his system of provisions; while the King, at their request, gave instructions that all papal bulls should be seized at the ports.[1] In 1346 the Commons, irritated at the failure of their petition, urged that the revenues of all alien priories should pass to the King, while in 1351, after years of agitation, they succeeded in passing the famous *Statute of Provisors.*[2] By this it was enacted that in all preferments where 'reservation, collation, or provision had been made by the court of Rome' the preferment should be voided,

[1] Wals., i. 254–8.

[2] Gee and Hardy, 112–21. The *Statute of Provisors* is made 'by the assent of all the great men and the commonalty.' The prelates probably had no part in it. See Stubbs, ii. 629, and *Rot. Parl.*, ii. 285, for their refusal to assent to the *Statute of Præmunire.*

and forfeited for that turn to the Crown, and that all holders of provisions 'shall be attached by their bodies, and brought in to answer; and if they be convicted, they shall abide in prison till they have made ransom to the King.'

In 1390 the first statute was strengthened, 'it being shown to our lord the King, by the grievous complaint of all the commons of the realm, that the grievances and mischiefs aforesaid do daily abound, to the damage and destruction of the realm of England.' In spite of these stringent ordinances, the old abuses lingered on. 'At the sinful city of Avenon,'[1] as the Good Parliament (1376) daringly branded it, brokers still procured that 'a caitiff who knows nothing and is worth nothing shall be promoted to churches and prebends of the value of a thousand marks.' The acts, in fact, failed through the usual cause—Papacy and Crown conspiring together to force their will upon the English Church, and replenish their funds at her expense. The statute, in fact, defeated itself by giving the Crown a powerful instrument for effecting bargains at the court of Rome. Throughout the fourteenth century we find Pope and King in collusion; the Pope sending bulls to support the royal candidate for bishoprics,

[1] *Rot. Parl.*, ii. 336–9.

the King allowing the Pope to "provide" his cardinals with rich benefices, though always careful to guard against the denationalisation of the episcopate itself.

The modern historian is wont to wax very angry with the Bishop of Rome for his reservations, collations, and provisions. No doubt we do well to be angry. But our anger must not lead to injustice. In practice the Crown was as guilty as the Pope. For the Crown had found that the system of provisions was the easiest way of paying its civil servants. Take the case of John of Sandale, a clerk in the King's service, afterwards Chancellor of England and Bishop of Winchester. "He, when yet a subdeacon, obtained the chancellorship of St. Patrick's, at Dublin, the treasurership of Lichfield, seven churches in seven dioceses, and three prebends at Wells, Howden, and Beverley, and had leave from the Pope to accept additional benefices to the value of two hundred pounds. The requisite dispensation he had obtained from Clement v. at the instance of the King of England. This is a good illustration of that viciously circular process from which an escape was impossible until the Pope's claims were utterly denied. The King's civil service must be maintained, but can only be maintained out

of the revenues of the churches, such is the people's impatience of taxation. The only method, however, by which these revenues can be secured for such an object must be found in papal dispensations. Therefore the Pope's power to dispense with the laws that he has ordained must be acknowledged. And then when the Pope tries to make profit for himself out of the power that we allow to him, we begin to complain and to pass *Statutes of Provisors* which we dare not enforce lest the King's civil service should break down."[1]

But the student should note that by this joint deal the popes stood to be the loser. The Crown could at all times shuffle off responsibility for unpopular acts upon its partner at a distance; it reaped the profits, but did not share the odium. When it suited its purpose, it could also pose as the safeguard of bishops and clergy against papal extortion. The Papacy, on the other hand, became more and more opposed in national thought to the interests of the people, to the interests even of the clergy, more and more dependent upon the connivance of the Crown for the maintenance of its position. In the fifteenth century she seemed to have gained. The various candidates for the crown—Lancastrian, Yorkist, and

[1] Maitland, *Canon Law*, 157. See *infra*, p. 61.

Tudor—were bound by the insecurity of their positions to cultivate the friendship of the Pope. One of the first acts of Henry IV. was practically to annul the statute against provisors, a concession to Rome which his father, the Duke of Lancaster, and Richard II. had attempted in 1391.[1] As the century wore on, all anti-papal legislation became more and more a dead letter. No statesman at Avignon or Rome was wise enough to discern the inevitable results, or to foresee the day when the Crown, strong at last in the destruction both of its rivals and the ancient nobility, would find that its profit lay in a break with the Papacy. When that day came there was no national respect to preserve the See of Rome from its whilom ally; on the contrary, a consciousness only of long-continued injustice and oppression.

V

The deep-seated discontent of the people was not restricted to papal extortion. In 1353 the Commons struck a blow at the abuse of appeals to the papal courts. The *Statute of Præmunire*,[2]

[1] Wylie, i. 70, 31; Stubbs, ii. 506, iii. 324.

[2] First *Statute of Præmunire* was passed in 1353 'by the assent and prayer of the great men and Commons'; the second *Statute of Præmunire* in 1393.

the most formidable of all the weapons which Parliament placed in the hands of the Crown that it might resist the Papacy, was directly caused by the efforts of unsuccessful provisors to reverse the Act of 1351 by lodging an appeal at Avignon. Indirectly, however, it was due to the growing discontent of the people with the whole system of making the Roman Curia the omnipotent court of appeal for all Christendom. With the origin of the appellative jurisdiction of the Papacy we have dealt elsewhere.[1] However valuable the existence of a supreme court of Christendom at Rome may have been in the darker ages—and we are not careful to deny either its value or necessity—the abuses of that court were notorious and oppressive. The venality of the court was proverbial; all attempts at cure by reforming popes seemed in vain. 'O money, money!' Grosseteste is reported to have cried, after one of his interviews with Innocent IV., 'how much power you have, especially at the Roman Court.' Matthew of Paris adds as his comment that the Curia could be turned by money, now one way, now another, like a reed shaken by the wind.

Nor was the corruption the only abuse. As

[1] See *Church of the West*, ii. c. 4. The mastery of the subject-matter of this chapter is indispensable to the student.

Hildebert, Archbp. of Tours, had foretold in a letter to Honorius II. (1125), rogues of all sorts had learned to take advantage of this method of checking interference with their evil courses. Nothing had more stirred the wrath of St. Bernard than this. 'All the good-for-nothings, all the litigious, among priests and people,' he wrote in one of his fiery letters to the Pope (180th), 'fly to you, and come back, boasting that they have obtained protection where they ought to have found chastisement. The sword of Phinehas is blunted against the shield of apostolic protection extended over the wrong-doers.' 'I will give you an example,' he bursts out elsewhere, 'of what comes of your appeals. A wedding was prepared, the day of the marriage had arrived, the guests were invited, all was ready,—when lo! a fellow who lusted after his neighbour's bride interfered with an appeal. The bridegroom is in dismay; all is confusion; the priest dare not pronounce the nuptial benediction; all preparations are for nought; the guests must disperse, and nothing can be done till the appeal has been heard at Rome.'[1]

This illustration of St. Bernard is no doubt an exaggeration, one of those occasional events which become historic, not only because it is rare, but

[1] Bernard, *De Consideratione*, iii. c. 2. (In Goldast, ii. No. 9.)

because it shows most forcibly a great evil or possible danger. The evil and danger had not grown less in the two centuries since St. Bernard. From every part of Christendom carriers and messengers, 'Rome-runners' of every kind were always on the road, speeding to the Papal Court with their complaints and requests. The chancery of the Holy See was overwhelmed with work, and however anxious a pope might be to deal justly, it was impossible for any man to be the universal judge of all men and all things. The least evil was the unavoidable delay. We read, for instance, of one case which dragged on before six popes, and when at last it was decided plaintiff and defendant had both passed away. But if in this matter the papal courts were not unlike our English Chancery—considering the number of cases with which they had to deal and their intricacy they were far more expeditious,—in the matter of expense they were unrivalled. The apostolic chamber, as one of their own number beareth record, was an ocean into which all rivers ran without overflowing it.[1] The "refreshers" of proctors and cardinals—and without proctor or cardinal you could do nothing—let alone the lesser crowd of briefers, bull-writers, engrossers, examiners, and the like, were even

[1] Niem, 504.

more burdensome than the exorbitant charges of the law in our own day. Lawyers of all sorts, whether lay or clerical, were in that age noted for their corruption.

> Thou had bet met (better measure) a mist on Malvern hills
> Than get a mum of their mouth, till money be them shewed,

wailed William Langland as he denounced the evils of an age in which 'law was grown lord.' The papal courts were in this respect no worse—perhaps, on the whole, more restrained—than the courts of the King. But while men felt that the evils of their own courts could be cured, they realised in the abuses of Avignon the burden of a foreign court, the staff of whose yoke they were determined to break.

Hitherto we have spoken of the legislation of the fourteenth century as antipapal. But in reality it was more than this: it was anti-ecclesiastical. The primary object of the *Statute of Provisors,* no doubt, was to prevent the "provisions" of the popes. But it was none the less welcome to its promoters, because it enabled them to deal a blow at ecclesiastics in general. For in practice the Pope did not, as a rule, "provide" to benefices, the presentation to which belonged to laymen. He contented himself with appropriating the patronage of bishops

and abbots. By their own oft-repeated theory, bishops and abbots could scarcely resist his claims, at anyrate with any pretence of logic. Even Grosseteste, 'the hammer and despiser of the Romans,' whose 'sharp epistle' has been the admiration of successive generations, had proclaimed in the strongest words that all ecclesiastical benefices are at the disposal of the Pope: 'I know, and know as a truth, that to the Lord Pope and the holy Roman Church belongs this right, of being able to ordain at will to all benefices of the Church.'[1] All men were not so heroic as Grosseteste, or so careless of their own consistency. Ecclesiastics in general might grumble, but made little real resistance to papal demands. 'Spiritual patrons dared not,' we read, 'because of the Pope, sue for their right in the King's court.' So the statute of 1390 forfeits to the Crown the presentation to all benefices in which a "provisor" appears on the scene, but such forfeit, be it observed, is not made if the patron is a layman. By another clause, if the Pope made "provision" to a bishopric the chapter was to lose for that occasion its rights of election. The sting of the clause lies in the words which follow; for a theory is propounded that of old the right of collation to bishoprics belonged to

[1] Grosseteste, *Epistles* (R.S.), p. 145; Maitland, *op. cit.* 66–9.

the Crown: 'Seeing that the election was first granted by the King's progenitors upon a certain form and condition, as to demand licence of the King to choose, and after the election to have his royal assent, and not in other manner, which conditions not being kept, the thing ought by reason to resort to its first nature.'[1] Nothing is so effectual as a historical fallacy perpetuated by statutes of the realm. The work of Hildebrand and Anselm[2] will soon be undone; the days of Henry VIII. and the modern *congé d'élire* are already in sight. The grip of the Crown upon the Church is being steadily strengthened. Little wonder that the English Reformation, when it came, should be so fully the work of the Crown, so Erastian in its character,—a Reformation, in fact, by Act of Parliament.

The *Statutes of Præmunire* were even more markedly anti-ecclesiastical. Their primary purpose, no doubt, as the preamble (1393) states, was to prevent 'the diverse sentences and censures of excommunication made by the holy father the Pope upon certain bishops of England because they have made execution' of the King's will, to thwart also the appeals to Avignon whereby 'diverse of the people be, and have been drawn

[1] Gee and Hardy, 117.
[2] See *Ch. West in M. A.*, i. 143, 144, 186.

out of the realm to answer for things whereof the cognisance pertains to the King's court.' But their other design was even more important, not the less so because less openly avowed. Hitherto the courts Christian and the King's courts had been regarded as equals, each supreme in its own definite province. The decisions of the one in matters pertaining to the Church—the rights of patronage alone excepted—were as absolute as the decisions of the other in matters pertaining to the State. Henceforth 'all the people of the King's allegiance, of whatsoever condition they be, . . . which do sue in any other court'—the reference is not to Avignon, but to the courts Christian of the Church—'to defeat or impeach the judgments given in the King's court, shall answer to the King in their proper persons of the contempt done in this behalf.'

For the next century, after this statute, the courts Christian were in a state of slow decay. The *Præmunire* statutes, in fact, were rarely used at all, except as a weapon for crushing the English ecclesiastical tribunals. The courts Christian, it is true, were still allowed to deal with morals and heresies, and all matters connected with wills. But the old claim of the Church to be the equal of the State; that her laws, law-givers, law courts, and lawyers, are in

nowise bound to obey the State; that the canon law may override the common law,—was bound to disappear when the one party in the supposed partnership had at its disposal so tremendous a weapon as the pains and penalties of *Præmunire.* Men in all ages have found it difficult to argue on any terms of equality with a man with a bludgeon. Once the ecclesiastics had possessed the bludgeon, and right mercilessly had they used it; but no one cared now for their obsolete excommunications, unless, indeed, he were an outlaw or Lollard. Lyndwood,[1] in his lectures at Oxford (1430), might choose to regard *Circumspecte Agatis* and other writs and statutes as documents not 'authentic,' and to argue as if the canon law of Rome was still supreme in England; but a hundred years of *Præmunire* were more effectual than many academic lectures. By the close of the fifteenth century the old power of the courts Christian was gone. Even ecclesiastics had been driven into but a slack allegiance to the supreme law of their Church, the canon law of Rome. Yet in her canon law the Papacy had found the anvil upon which she had forged her claims. The canon law was a part of the very *esse* of the medieval Church. To weaken its hold, to deny its authority, was in

[1] For Lyndwood, see Maitland, *op. cit.* pp. 1–50.

itself to prepare for the disappearance of that Church. This was precisely the task that the great statutes of the fourteenth century accomplished. That century, after all, was not so dreary and barren as at first it appears. Its work remains; foundations buried beneath the soil upon which a later and more dazzling generation built up its revolutions and reforms.

VI

Hitherto we have dwelt chiefly on the downfall of the Papacy. But before we pass away from this general survey of the rule and results of Avignon, a word should be said on the state of the other great forces in the medieval Church —the episcopate, the secular clergy, the monks, and the friars. In our present pages we shall confine ourselves to England; opportunity will arise later for dealing with the Continent.

Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we note the growth in importance of the secular priesthood. The ideal of religious life was changing. Men began to realise the selfishness of monasticism. They saw that they could not only serve their own generation, but serve God also to more effect in the vicarage than in the Benedictine cloister or the Carthusian cell. The fall of the friars hastened the reaction.

The enthusiasm which had led the great thinkers of the thirteenth century to give themselves to the Mendicants was exhausted. The more thoughtful began to perceive the value of the faithful discharge of parochial duty. Dante's ideal priests were monks and friars—Bernard, Francis, Dominic, Thomas. Two generations later Chaucer finds his ideal in a secular parson —threadbare, learned, and devout.

> Christ's lore and His apostles twelve he taught,
> And first he followed it himself.

The attempted reformations of Wyclif and Hus differed also from all previous revivals in their being led by seculars, who never tired of upholding the weakness of the monastic ideal.

We note the same reaction in the great university foundations of the fourteenth century. When William of Wykeham, the leader of the political party opposed to Wyclif, founded New College (1379), he showed that he agreed with Wyclif in thinking that the future lay with the seculars. "He saw that he could better contribute to a revivification of the old Church system by sending out into the world a continual succession of highly trained ecclesiastics, than by filling some secluded valley with the dwellings of contemplative recluses."[1] So, for the

[1] Rashdall, *Univs. in M. A.*, ii. 505.

first time in the history of Europe, he provided a home for secular priests, where they would be as well housed as the novices in an old Benedictine abbey. A few years earlier, Walter de Merton, by buying advowsons, which he attached to his college, began that system of college livings, almost unknown out of England, which, more than anything else, has contributed to the uplifting of the country clergy.

Even the stars in their courses fought for the seculars. When, in another volume, we shall deal with the causes which led to the downfall of the monasteries, we shall note the part played in their ruin by the Black Death of 1349. Wadding traced the decay of the Mendicants to the same cause, and much may be said for the partial truth of the explanation. But the very plague which emptied the monasteries, lowered their status, and stripped them of their wealth, produced a precisely opposite effect upon the seculars. So many thousands of the clergy perished that it was found impossible to obtain successors; many churches were left without ministers; deacons were authorised to give the sacraments; and the faithful exhorted to confess their sins to one another, in the full assurance that 'such confession would be profitable to them for the remission of sins.' Such teaching and

practices—we note in passing—probably prepared the way for Wyclif's Biblemen, by breaking down the sanctity which hitherto had hedged the priest. Another result, more abiding in its consequences, was a considerable rise in the status of vicars,[1]—in the majority, that is, of seculars. In spite of all the efforts of high-placed pluralists, aided by the scolding of the bishops, it was found impossible to obtain starveling vicars for the five marks a year hitherto deemed sufficient. 'If any priest of our province,' thundered Archbp. Islip, 'under any colour whatsover, receive more by the year than five marks, without cure of souls, or six with such cure, let him *ipso facto* incur the sentence of suspension from his office, unless, within a month, he pay what he received over and above that sum to the fabric fund of his church.' But such was 'the unbridled covetousness of men' that priests could not be obtained unless 'pampered with the excessive salaries' of seven, eight, or ten marks a year. All the efforts of Acts of Parliament to keep down the incomes of the vicars proved as useless as such measures always are. Wyclif tells us that in his day ten marks was the common stipend; while in 1439

[1] For the meaning and origin of "vicars," see *Ch. West*, ii. 162, 170–3.

all vicarages were augmented to twelve marks a year.[1]

Thus the income, temper, qualifications, and character of the parochial clergy were on the rise, though it must be confessed the improvement was slow. In page after page of his *Vox Clamantis* the poet Gower describes their vices and follies, not with the cynicism of the professional satirist, but with the sorrow of the believer. 'No one nowadays,' moaned Nicholas de Clamengis, 'in taking a cure of souls inquires into anything but the amount of the income. The level of life, it must be confessed, was low. The haunting of taverns and concubinage are among the common complaints of the times, and the easy fines with which they were punished—half a mark for incontinence—are significant of much. But when all their vices and faults have been duly weighed, the great fact remains that the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw the steady development in influence of the secular or parochial clergy. In these, and not the regulars, the Reformation would find its instruments.

The student of the English Church in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries will also note a growing characteristic of its episcopate. They

[1] *S.E.W.*, i. 291; *Rot. Parl.*, ii. 271, iii. 501, iv. 52; Wilkins, iii. 30, 135; Wylie, iii. 208 n. 13.

were rapidly becoming the servants of the King. Some of the bishops were men of low repute; a few even illiterate, like Lewis de Beaumont of Durham (1318), who knew so little Latin that he could not read aright the forms needful for his consecration. After much stammering, 'let it be taken,' he said, 'as read.' These were the men of whom the Monk of Malmesbury speaks: 'illiterate fools lording it in the Church of Christ,' 'who have learnt nothing, yet are ambitious to be rulers.' For the most part, the bishops of the fourteenth century were respectable, hardworking men; but they worked hard not so much in care for their spiritual interests, as in the discharge of their many secular offices. The typical English bishop of the period is the noted pluralist, William of Wykeham, for ever illustrious as Chancellor of England, architect and builder of the royal palace at Windsor, princely founder of New College and Winchester. The higher offices of the Church had become filled with the nominees and civil servants of the Crown, men out of touch with spiritual things, who, like John Kemp, Archbishop of York (1426–52), only visited his diocese for two or three weeks every ten years. Such men performed their duties by titular bishops *in partibus*, scores of whom were about at this time.

Upon these 'Cæsarean clergy,' as Wyclif called them, who climbed to promotion by their services to the Crown—'not a clerk of learning or of good life, but a kitchen clerk, or a penny clerk, or one wise in building castles'—Wyclif never tired of pouring out his scorn. But Wyclif was not alone. There are, said Gascoigne, 'three things that make a man a bishop in England: the will of the King, the will of the Pope, and money paid in abundance to the Court of Rome.' As a rule, the first prevailed; at times the third, as Bishop Bubwith found when he paid, in 1408, 13,000 gold florins for his translation from Salisbury to Bath and Wells. These were the men of whom Brunton of Rochester speaks, men who were 'only seeking for higher preferment, and aspiring to be translated to higher sees,' whose immersion in purely secular business went far to justify the sweeping declaration of Gascoigne, that he had never known a man promoted to be bishop who 'might, could, or would be of any use to men's souls.' These were the men whose indifference and hostility to all reform crushed out the Lollards, while their dependence and subservience to the Crown prepared the way for the Erastian revolution of a later age.[1]

[1] Gascoigne, *Collectanea*, ii. 527, 537, 514. *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, s.v. Stretton. *S.E.W.*, iii. 300, 335, and *passim* in Wyclif's works.

CHAPTER II

SEERS AND DREAMERS

In history the divine element lies hid; is missed at the time even by those who are its vehicle; and does not parade itself in what they consciously design, but lurks in what they unconsciously execute. It comes forth at the end of the ages—the retrospect of many generations instead of the foresight of one.

MARTINEAU: *Studies of Christianity*, p. 292.

§ 1. See Chapter I.

§ 2. For DANTE'S *De Monarchia* I have used the edition of E. MOORE, *Opere di D.A.*, Oxf., 1894. (The main positions will be found in I. c. v. 65–71, c. vii. 15–18, c. xi. 55–60; II. c. vii. 86–90; III. cc. xiii.–xvi.) Analyses are given by BRYCE, *H.R.E.*, 263–9; GREGOROVIUS, vi. 19–24.

§ 3. For Marsiglio and Ockham, see POOLE'S able analysis, *Med. Thought*, c. 9. There are also analyses in Creighton, Pastor, Gregorovius, all largely dependent on RIEZLER'S (†) *Die Literarischen Widersacher der Päpste zur zeit Ludwig des Baiers* (1874). For Lewis and the voluminous German literature that has sprung up about him, see Greg. vi. 128 n., 131 n. Marsiglio's *Defensor Pacis* is in GOLDAST, ii. 147–312, where Marsiglio had added an 'Index Præmissorum' (309–12), giving the forty-two conclusions of his work. I have contented myself with this. Ockham's political works are also in GOLDAST. (Convenient index or summary of their contentions, ii. 396–7.) For the life of Ockham, see POOLE in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, LITTLE'S *Grey Friars at Oxford*, 220, 224 ff. Full analysis of his philosophy in PRANTL (†), iii. 327–420.

§ 4. For the Spiritual Franciscans: Lea, *Inquis. in M.A.*, iii. 1–180; Sabatier, *St. Francis*, App. 'Critical Study of Sources.' The works of OCKHAM and MICHAEL OF CASENA (*Contra Errores Papæ*, ii. pp. 1236–1361, index p. 1336) in GOLDAST. [Ed. Hanover, 1611. In the reissue of 1621 vol. ii. is called vol. iii.] For the *Eternal Gospel*, see RENAN'S *New Studies*, or the more sympathetic GEBHART'S *L'Italie Mystique* (1890), a history of the great Italian revival. For Joachim, *c.* 2; the *Eternal Gospel*, *c.* 5; the Spiritual Franciscans, *c.* 6.

SEERS AND DREAMERS

I

ON March 19, 1314, the long farce of the trial of the Templars was finished.[1] The Grand Master, Jacques du Bourg-Molay, was slowly roasted on the island of the Seine, while the bull of Clement V. proclaiming the suppression of the order and the confiscation of their property was read to the people of Paris. As the Master was burning 'in the light of the setting sun,' he is reported to have summoned 'Clement, iniquitous and cruel judge,' to meet him within forty days before the throne of the Most High. The prophecy, the fulfilment of which was, of course, exact, is the verdict of the age on the life and work of the first of the French popes. When in the following April the rumour ran that Clement was dying of cancer at Roquemaure, near Carpentras, all men realised that one of the worst and weakest of the Bishops of Rome was passing to his account. His nepotism and in-

[1] See *Ch. West*, ii. 302–5; Lea, *Inquis.*, ii. 238–334.

satiable avarice, his dalliance with the Countess of Talleyrand Perigord, might have been forgotten by future generations; but his break with the past, his degradation of the Papacy into the creature of France, are crimes more lasting than brass. For these history can find neither excuse nor forgiveness. On April 20, 1314, Clement lay dead and neglected, mourned by none. Those whom he had enriched with his gold were chiefly anxious to secure their treasures. But his influence survived his decease. When the conclave assembled at Carpentras to elect his successor, his nephews, with other Gascons, attacked the city with cries of 'Death to the Italian cardinals!' They fired the houses, plundered the traders, and drove the cardinals elsewhere.

The riot of the Gascons was a shadow thrown beforehand of the great Schism of 1378. At all costs the French party were determined to prevent the return of the Papacy to Rome. When the conclave assembled, Cardinal Napoleon Orsini had brought before them, in a letter to the King of France, the desolation of the 'Sanctuary of the Apostles': 'The throne of St. Peter was broken up, and the patrimony stripped as much by its governors as by robbers.' A more potent pen than his had already made its appeal. In his letter from Florence to the

Italian cardinal, Dante voiced the universal feeling in demanding the return of the Papacy. He bitterly reproved the College for their blindness in the election of an adventurer and sycophant like Clement; he pointed out the way of repentance:

'You, the chiefs of the Church militant, have neglected to guide the chariot of the Bride of the Crucified One along the path so clearly marked out for her. Like that false charioteer Phaeton, you have left the right track, and though it was your office to lead the hosts safely through the wilderness, you have dragged them after you into the abyss. But one remedy now remains. You, who have been the authors of all this confusion, must go forth with one heart and one soul into the fray in defence of the Bride of Christ, whose seat is in Rome. This you must do, and then, returning in triumph from the battlefield, you shall hear the song, "Glory to God in the highest"; and the disgrace of the covetous Gascons, striving to rob the Latins of their renown, shall serve as a warning to all future ages.'[1]

The ultramontane cardinals paid no heed to the pleadings of the poet. After a vacancy of two years and three months—once more we notice the shadow of coming events—the Gascon faction triumphed (August 1316), and procured the election of James Duèse, known to history as John XXII. His father was a cobbler of Cahors;[2] the son had made his way by his extraordinary talents and knowledge of civil and

[1] See *Opere*, ed. Moore, 411–13, a fragment only.

[2] So Villani. But see Greg., vi. 101 n. See *Ch. West*, ii. 16 n., for a list of popes of humble birth.

canon law. According to the common scandal, the cardinals, in the weariness of the deadlock, had agreed to elect as Pope the name to be submitted by the Cardinal of Porto. He nominated himself. By another version, he was only elected after promising the Italians that he would neither mount horse nor mule until he should set out on his return to Rome. He kept his vow by hiring a boat and dropping down the Rhone to Avignon.[1] Both tales are true; they mark men's estimate of his character.

Clement v. had lived as a guest at the Dominican monastery of Avignon.[2] The erection, begun in 1339, of the Palace of the Popes, and the purchase in 1348 of Avignon from Joanna, the Queen of Naples, for the small sum of eighty thousand florins, showed the fixed determination of the French cardinals. They were perfectly content with their Babylonish captivity.

The detailed story of this disastrous period lies outside our purpose. The whole epoch is chiefly memorable for the evil that it wrought.[3] With its financial oppressions we have already dealt;

[1] *Chron. Melsa* (Rolls), ii. 319, has this tale.

[2] The popes owned in the neighbourhood the county of Venaissin, which they had compelled Raymond of Toulouse to cede in 1228, after the Albigensian crusade.

[3] For the missionary enterprises of the Avignon popes, a redeeming feature, see Pastor, i. 60 n.

the Schism it made inevitable we shall defer to another volume. Though not all the popes were corrupt, with two exceptions—John XXII. and Innocent VI.,—they were insignificant. Even the better popes were sadly lacking in purpose and will. One of the best was Benedict XII. (1334–42), a Cistercian monk, son of a miller of Languedoc, a learned man, 'just, hard, and upright.' But the weakness of his acts is a constant satire upon his ideals. He believed that the Papacy ought to return to Italy; he begun instead the great palace at Avignon. He kicked against the pricks, but did nothing to destroy the French bondage.[1]

Before his election, Urban V. (1362–70), an outsider to the College, had exclaimed that if a pope were elected which should restore the Papacy to Rome he would die content. On his election he 'cut himself off from his former lasciviousness and light conduct,' and 'in his first consistory publicly interdicted any from presenting petitions to him' by his former concubine or his daughter.[2] In May 1367, encouraged by the Emperor Charles IV., realising also the growing insecurity of Avignon now that

[1] His character was blackened by his enemies. Milman, vii. 448; Greg., vi. 224; Neander, ix. 58.

[2] *Chron. Melsa*, iii. 155, 169.

the war with England had thrown the affairs of France into disorder, Urban returned to Rome, attended, it is said, by only five cardinals. The others would not quit the luxuries of Avignon. This return would have been impossible had not the genius of the Spanish cardinal Albornoz, the legate of Innocent VI., subdued the tyrants of Italy and wrested the states of the Church from their grasp. But within three years Urban, frightened by the death of Albornoz (August 1367), had retreated to Avignon unable to resist the incessant murmurs of his cardinals.

Gregory XI. (1370–8) was a man of conscience and piety. But the one glorious action in a most unfortunate reign was his return to Rome (September 1376) in obedience to the pleadings of Catherine of Siena. In spite of the prophetess, he was preparing to retire to Avignon when death interrupted his plans. Innocent VI. (1352–62), the best of the Avignon popes, a distinguished canonist of Limoges, a just man, severe against abuse, a prudent and far-seeing administrator, was almost alone in having a purpose and carrying it out.

II

But the long pontificate of John XXII. (1316–34) must not be lightly dismissed. Though an

old man when he ascended the throne—he was born in 1243—to the last his energy was remarkable, his restlessness incessant. Some seventy thousand documents in the papal archives bear witness to his world-wide labours. Few subjects escaped his notice—from the habit of the French King of talking in church, the misrule of Edward II. of England, or the devices of sorcerers, to the weightier matters of theology and law. His vast learning and pedantry was only equalled by his avarice; his passionateness by his piety.[1] His ambition convulsed the world with war; his theological tenets filled the Church with strife. By his immoderation and dogmas he did more than any other pope except Boniface VIII. to overthrow the dreams of Hildebrand.

Of his rapacity sufficient mention has been made. His reign was even more remarkable for his violent quarrel with the Empire, or rather with the shadow of it that survived to imitate the past. This struggle, though in itself insignificant when compared with the conflicts of the Gregories and Frederics, must always be of interest to the student of the Reformation. For though Lewis the Bavarian was powerless

[1] For a case of his clemency, see Greg., vi. 178. On the other side, Milman, vii. 343, 382.

when not unbalanced, it was his fortune to rally to his cause thinkers and scholars whose works reveal an antagonism to the Papacy, the effects of which were felt in a later age. To the help of Lewis there also came spiritual enthusiasts, whose sacrifices redeem from ridicule their impossible conceptions. In this chapter we shall touch, as briefly as possible, on the outer framework of the struggle of Lewis, then pass to the new political speculations, the great names in which are Dante and Marsiglio of Padua. We shall conclude with a survey of the remarkable spiritual rebellion led by Michael, of Casena, the General of the Franciscans, and the Englishman William of Ockham.

Lewis the Bavarian—"busy, and even strenuous, but not successful"—need not himself long detain us. When, in 1313, the heroic Emperor Henry VII., whose unequal struggle really ends the history of the Empire in Italy, fell a victim to the fevers of the Tuscan summer, five of the electors proclaimed Lewis the King of the Romans, while two others nominated Frederic of Austria. The two candidates fought for the crown for years, while the Pope, a mere tool in the hands of the French king and Robert of Naples, of the house of Anjou, declared the Empire vacant, and put forth pretensions more

arrogant than any in which Gregory VII. had indulged, or for which Boniface had fallen. In the bull of March 31st, John announced that the Pope was the sole lawful vicar of the Empire while it remained vacant, and that all the imperial vicars in the cities and provinces of Italy must immediately surrender their offices to himself. This claim of the Pope to the administration of the Empire won the hearty support both of France and Naples, of whom the one dreamed of seizing the Empire; the other, of getting rid of the imperial restraints. The two monarchs therefore encouraged against another arguments and pretensions which they would not for a moment have allowed against themselves. It was the old story of selfishness, hitherto the surest foundation of papal power and papal claims.

For five years Lewis could do little. All his energies were absorbed in his struggle with Frederic, who was supported both by the French King and John XXII. But the German people rallied to his standard. They realised that the struggle with his rival was really a conflict with France, while the Italian Ghibellines made war on the papal armies and laughed at John's bulls of excommunication. At length, in September 1322, the battle of Mühldorf on the Inn[1] gave

[1] Description in Carlyle, *Fred. the Gt.*, i. 107.

the victory to Lewis. With the failure of the sword, John fell back upon his other weapons. From the secure retreat of Avignon he denounced (October 1323) the usurpations of Lewis, and required him to resign the Empire. In the following July he deposed and excommunicated him. Lewis met the papal sentence by a counter manifesto. He appealed from the Pope, the usurper of the Empire, to a General Council. In 1328 we find him in Rome, receiving the imperial crown from the hands of delegates of the people, deposing John, and with his own hands placing the fisherman's ring on the finger of his antipope, a simple monk of Corbara. The struggle would have been a caricature of the conflict between the Hohenstaufen and the Gregories had not the help of unexpected allies, spiritual enthusiasts, and political speculators, made it for ever memorable.

Of the political speculators the foremost was Dante. His *De Monarchia* is in form a prophecy of the blessings which the world should reap from the advent in Italy of Henry VII. In lines of sublime sorrow, the poet had already summoned Henry to his heritage—

> Come and behold thy Rome, who calls on thee,
> Desolate widow, day and night with moans,
> 'My Cæsar, why dost thou desert my side?'

Henry was dead (August 1313), buried amid the wailings of the Ghibellines in his beloved Pisa. He had obtained the crown which Beatrice had shown prepared for him in Paradise:

> Few now are wanting here! In that proud stall
> On which the crown, already o'er its state
> Suspended, holds thine eyes,
> shall rest the soul
> Of the great Henry, he who, by the world
> Augustus hailed, to Italy must come
> Before her day be ripe.[1]

Henry was dead: the last sacrifice offered up by Germany on the soil of Italy to a great but impossible idea. But the hope of which he had seemed the new Messiah could not die. So, in his *De Monarchia*, the poet, wandering in the exile which had overtaken the adherents of the Ghibelline ideal,[2] laid down in scholastic syllogisms and abstractions the ideal of universal Empire—that golden eagle which he had seen in his dreams floating in Paradise.

The *De Monarchia* is the most thoughtful expression of the deepest conviction of the Middle Ages. Its main dogma is that unbroken

[1] *Purg.*, vi.; *Parad.*, xxx. Cf. Dante's letter to Henry, *Opere*, 409–11.

[2] For date of *De Mon.*, see Bryce, 263 n.; Greg., vi. 19, 21 n. For the expedition of Henry, Greg., vi. 25–92, and for the common belief that he was poisoned in the sacramental cup, *ibid.* vi., 87 n.; and Buddensieg, Wyclif, *Polem. Works*, i. 227.

continuity of the Empire, the consciousness of which was the mainspring of medieval politics and the key to its contradictions. In his weariness of the endless strife of princes and cities, "Dante raises a passionate cry for some power to still the tempest," and "restore unity and peace to hapless Italy" (Bryce). He can find this power only in the restoration of the Ghibelline ideal. Only when the Emperor has become the one shepherd of the one civic flock will mankind secure freedom and peace. "Justice" also will be "best secured by a supreme arbiter of disputes, himself unsolicited of ambition, since his dominion is already bounded by the ocean." So, with the usual scholastic paradoxes, he develops in three books his three principles—that universal monarchy is necessary for society; that this *imperium* belongs to the Roman people; and that its authority is derived immediately from God, and not from the Pope as His Vicar.

The reader, if he have opportunity to open Dante's pages, will probably turn away in impatience from imperialist theories whose absoluteness is only matched by their historic unreality. He will marvel at the medieval logic, which sets out that the fact that Christ was born under the Roman Empire 'in the fulness of times' was proof that He was persuaded of

its justice (ii. 12), while by His dying under that Empire He confirmed its jurisdiction over the whole human race (ii. 13). He will marvel most of all at the chapter in which Dante gravely sets forth the miracles whereby God has testified to the authority of the Empire (ii. 4), the fall of the shields of Numa, the geese of the Capitol, the hailstorm after Cannae, and the like. He will remember that within a few years of this glorification of the Empire, this very Empire under Lewis and his successors sank to its lowest depths of degradation.

But Dante's exalted Utopia must not be judged altogether by modern standards of logic or appeal to facts. Its importance was twofold. In the first place, as Bryce has remarked, with a reference to the date at which it was written, it proved "an epitaph instead of a prophecy." No abstract splendours of ideal, no compressed energy of diction, could conceal from later generations that the medieval idea was for ever buried; that Rome had become scarcely more than an honoured name; in the fine phrase of Gregorovius, but "a document smothered in dust, on which was inscribed claims to universal supremacy." No small factor in this burial was the clearness with which the poet unconsciously showed that his ideal looked backward instead of forward.

Yet, in fairness, the vision was not altogether set on a vanishing past. To us to-day the chief value of the *De Monarchia* lies in its emphasis of the secular. For Dante's ideal temporal monarch —'*rex mundi et Dei minister*' (Ep. vi.)—was only Hildebrand's ideal pope with a difference. Dante had translated this glorified president of the human republic from the Church into the secular sphere. Herein the poet proved, as in all else that he wrote, the prophet of the future. For, as Gregorovius has justly remarked (vi. 24), "there lies at the bottom of Dante's enthusiasm for the Roman Empire, a deep love of historic humanity, the life of which, in all its relations, is conceived as a revelation of the Divine Spirit, with no lower claims than those of the Church."

In spite of all its abstractions and unrealities, Dante's *De Monarchia*, by its protest against papal usurpation, by its emphasis of the value of the secular sides of life, laid foundations upon which later generations were to build up a revolution and reformation. The resounding lines of the Æneid on which he relies—

> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
> Hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
> Parcere subiectis, et debellare superbos.

were to find their accomplishment, not by seek-

ing the living among the dead, but by the evolution of the future. For in 1338 Germany awoke to the consciousness of her rights and independence. At Rhense, a hamlet on the Rhine, five miles above Coblenz, the German electors repudiated in the name of the nation the claims of the Papacy, and severed Germany from Italy and Rome. This separation of the twin sisters was the beginning of the greater severance of the German intellect from the Roman Church. At the same time, in Italy, the genius of Cola di Rienzo grasped and expressed the new ideas of revolt. For this extraordinary man was something more than a "tragic actor in the tattered purple of antiquity." His importance lies in his discovery that the salvation of Italy lay neither in Guelf nor Ghibelline, but in Italy itself. Though in later years Cola disgraced or threw aside his own ideal, though five centuries should elapse before it could be accomplished, the author of this new idea should not be forgotten.[1]

III

Dante's *De Monarchia* was a failure "because it looked backward instead of forward." The

[1] For Rienzo (b. 1314, d. Oct. 8, 1354), see the full and interesting account, Greg., vi. 231–376, 683–5.

great work of Marsiglio of Padua, the *Defensor Pacis*,[1] erred in the opposite direction by proceeding "on the basis of an advanced polity which it needed centuries for men to understand." Marsiglio dei Raimondini is one of the most interesting if impracticable thinkers of the Middle Ages. Born at Padua in 1270, of a plain burgher family, his reckless nature drove him from the study of medicine to the profession of arms. In 1312 we find him studying at Paris under William Ockham. At a later date he took orders as a secular cleric. Though the great ally of the Spiritual Franciscans, he never himself entered their ranks. By occupation, it would appear, he was in later life a physician. In June 1324, with the help of his friend John of Jandun,—'the two beasts,' as the Pope called them, 'from the abyss of Satan,'—he wrote his great work in the incredible space of two months. Two years later, probably in the summer of 1326, he joined himself to Lewis, at that time at Nuremburg. There he became the leader in the band of vision-

[1] Another work of Marsiglio's is on the familiar theme, *Of the Translation of the Empire* (1313) (in Goldast, ii. 147–153; cf. *Ch. West*, ii. 12; Bryce, 218; Poole, *Med. Thought*, 250). In his *Forma Dispensationis super Affinitatis*, etc. (Goldast, ii. 1386–90), we see how far Marsiglio would have carried the powers of a secular head of the Church.

aries who urged the Emperor on in his struggle with 'the great dragon and old serpent'—John XXII. 'Do thou defend me with thy sword; I will defend thee with my pen,' Ockham is reported to have said to Lewis when he fled to his court at Munich. Both Marsiglio and Ockham kept their promise. In treatise after treatise they criticised the nature of the papal power, denied its claims, and demanded the restoration of secular supremacy.

The *Defensor Pacis* is the most original political treatise of the Middle Ages. In his first book Marsiglio discusses, after the method of Aristotle, the origin and principles of government. Sovereignty, he held, rests with the people, from whom, 'or the majority of them, determining by their choice or will, expressed by speech in the general assembly of the citizens,' proceeds all right and power. For the purposes of action, 'the rule of a king is perhaps the more perfect'; but the king, as the officer of the people, must be directly elected. Marsiglio will have nothing to do with either divine right or the hereditary principle. Such elected monarch is responsible to the people, whose instrument he is, and by whom he may be deposed if he override the national will. Equally remarkable is Marsiglio's anticipation of certain modern

social movements. He would give to the civil power the right of determining the number of men to be employed in every trade or profession.

In his second book Marsiglio is not less thoroughgoing in his examination of the nature of the priesthood and its relation to the State. He begins by defining the Church as the entire body of Christian men—its 'truest and most proper signification.' He thus sweeps away at one stroke the pretensions of a sacerdotal order. The sole business of the priest is to preach the faith and administer the sacraments. His rights and claims should be strictly limited to this. Excommunication, for instance, can only be decreed by the congregation to which the believer belongs, while the clergy, in all but their strictly spiritual functions, must be treated exactly the same as all other members of the civil society, save only that their crimes should be punished with greater strictness, because they cannot plead the same excuse of ignorance. Marsiglio follows Jerome, and anticipates the modern Nonconformist in his maintaining that bishop and priest are convertible terms. More remarkable in its originality is his claim that heresy must be unpunished in this world, except in so far as it may prove dangerous to society. Even in this case the punishment should only be inflicted by

the civil courts. Errors of opinion, 'howsoever great they may be,' must on no account be punished. Of these Jesus is the judge in a world to come, whose reality and terrors it is the business of priests to uphold before offenders.

Marsiglio reduced Church government to a question of expediency—in this again anticipating some modern Nonconformists. Though in theory all priests are equal, the Papacy, he held, is convenient as a symbol of the unity of the Church, and as providing a needed president for its councils. None the less Marsiglio sweeps aside all the fictions, ancient and modern, of papal historians. He doubts whether Peter was ever bishop of Rome at all; he disbelieves in his superiority over the other apostles, and questions his power to hand on his gift to his successors. He brushes aside the *Decretals* as not necessary to salvation. With rare historical insight, Marsiglio traces the origin of the Papacy to the influence of the Roman Empire, and to the donation of Constantine, the genuineness of which he does not dispute. The power of the keys, he holds, is of but limited extent. The keys open and close the door of forgiveness, but the turnkey is not the judge. Without the penitence of the sinner, priestly absolution is of no avail. The argument of the "two swords" he sweeps

aside by the text, "My kingdom is not of this world." Thus the Papacy can have no temporal sovereignty or jurisdiction; the attempts to enforce these have filled the Church with corruption and disorder. With Marsiglio the State is supreme, or rather, as with Calvin,[1] State and Church become one. Ecclesiastics, even the Pope himself, must be subject to her tribunals, their number be limited by its pleasure. To the State also belongs all patronage, which should, as a rule, be exercised by the free election of the parish itself, with whom also should rest the power of dismissal. The ecclesiastical property must be vested in the State, which can at any time secularise superfluities to other uses.

Perhaps the most fruitful of Marsiglio's contentions was his defence of a General Council, formed of clergy and laity alike, as the supreme power in the Church. Such a Council would voice the Church Universal, and be a supreme Parliament of the nations, both in matters temporal and spiritual. The Catholic creed is determined by its interpretations, which must in all cases be based on Scripture alone. For the Bible is the foundation of faith, and of the authority of the Church. To its decisions the

[1] Döllinger and Pastor (i. 78) both detect the influence of Marsiglio on Calvin, but without proof.

Pope would of necessity be subject, and it alone could pronounce excommunication or interdict upon peoples and their rulers.

Marsiglio has been termed a *visionaire.* His later political career in Italy, as the Vicar of Rome, would justify the title. All men would have saluted him as competent to rule had he never had the opportunity to demonstrate his incapacity.[1] But in his writings Marsiglio was a *visionaire* only in the sense in which all prophets are such. For of necessity the seer must be before his age; the coming of his hour may be delayed for centuries. No seer ever had a clearer vision of the new order towards which the world was slowly moving; no prophet ever glanced deeper into the future. In his principles, as Dr. Poole observes, "the modern constitutional statesmen, the modern Protestant," find little to alter. He has only "to develop them, and fill in their outline." The works of Marsiglio give us in clear outline the ideals which now regulate the progress of Europe. The bolts which he forged have shattered the doctrine of Divine Right and the temporal claims of the Papacy. In his emphasis of the value of Scripture, though the hand that wrote was the hand of Marsiglio, the voice seems the voice of Luther. In his

[1] See Greg., vi. 140–160, for his curious career at Rome.

call to the laity he foreshadowed Wesley; in his views as to the rights of separate congregations he was the forerunner of the Independents.

Nor was Marsiglio without influence even in his own age. Wyclif has been called "the Morning Star of the Reformation," but the author of the *Defensor Pacis* might more justly claim the title. According to the bull of Gregory XI. in 1377, the conclusions of the Englishman 'but represent, with a few terms changed, the perverted opinions and ignorant doctrines of Marsiglio of Padua, of damned memory, and of John of Jandun.'[1] His clear formulation of the idea of a supreme Parliament of the Church explains the ease with which, in the next generation, the Conciliar theory won its way to general acceptance. With a true insight into his claims as a forerunner, his work was translated into English at the beginning of the Reformation, and included in a list of prohibited books.[2] But "in the clear definition of the limits of ecclesiastical authority, in his assertion of the dignity of the individual believer, Marsiglio's ideas still remain unrealised." In these speculations he stands alone among medi-

[1] Gee and Hardy, 106. *Fasciculus Zizaniorum*, 243.

[2] Baker, "Notes on Burnet," *Brit. Mag.*, xxxvi. 395, who perhaps refers to W. Marshall's translation. London, 1535.

eval writers, so far above his age in the breadth of his outlook, "that the truths which he brought into view had to be rediscovered, without even the knowledge that he had found them out beforehand, by the political philosophers of modern times."[1]

If Marsiglio had learned much at Paris from the great English schoolman Ockham,[2] Ockham, whose books in point of time are later than Marsiglio's, had learned much from his more daring and original pupil. William of Ockham —a village of Surrey—was one of the most brilliant of the later English Franciscans. After studying at Oxford in the house of his order—that he was ever a member of Merton is a common but impossible blunder—he passed on to Paris. There he flung himself into the great controversy which was splitting the Minorites into rival camps. On Dec. 1, 1323, John XXII. ordered the Bishops of Ferrara and Bologna to make inquiry touching a sermon of Ockham's at Bologna, in which he had charged the Pope with heretical definitions. Ockham was condemned, but his capture, it would seem, was not effected until four years later. On May 25, 1328, he escaped from Avignon by boat, and at

[1] Poole, *op. cit.* 277.

[2] For his philosophy, see later, p. 137. See also App. B.

Aigues-Mortes found a ship which the Genoese had sent to his assistance. On June 8 he arrived at the Emperor's court at Pisa, but afterwards went to Munich. There he lived in security, in spite of the efforts of the Pope to arrest him, pouring out voluminous works against the Papacy and the heresies of John. In 1343 he began to collect his writings on Church and State into the form of an immense *Dialogus*, but whether this work was ever completed would seem to be uncertain. In 1349 Clement VI. sent him a pardon, provided he would recant his more obnoxious doctrines. He died shortly afterwards at Munich, and was buried there in the Franciscan Church; that, before the end, Ockham became reconciled to the Church, as Roman historians maintain, is at least doubtful.

Of the two men, Ockham, like most Englishmen, was more practical—we are referring at present merely to his political works—more influenced by the spirit of the day than by the demands of absolute logic. He had the usual reward. Marsiglio exercised little direct influence on his age; Ockham handed on his teaching through Wyclif and Hus to the German reformers of the sixteenth century. For the greatest difference between his standpoint and that of Marsiglio is his unwillingness to trust even a

General Council,—in the which we note he provided a place for women. Such a Council, he claimed, must be as fallible as the Pope and the doctors and fathers of the Church. Ockham, in fact, though he pays, with more than usual unreality, the customary medieval tribute to the imperial idea, is essentially an individualist, as in logic he was a nominalist. But this very individualism gave him his influence over another individualist and fellow-countryman, John Wyclif.

IV

William of Ockham was not merely the political philosopher and the friend of Marsiglio. He was the leader of the Spiritual Franciscans, those other allies who had assembled to the help of Lewis against the Pope. To understand the revolt of the Spiritual Franciscans, we must retrace our steps. In a previous volume[1] we lingered lovingly round the ideal of the great saint of the Middle Ages, Francis of Assisi. The later history of the friars, even before the death of Francis, is one of the tragedies of history, to the student wearisome by its endless squabbles, yet vital for the understanding of the history of the Church. Far be it from our purpose to

[1] *Ch. West*, ii. c. 6.

enter at length into the dreary annals of the conflict between the Zealots and Moderates. Their quarrel has long since burnt itself out into ashes, which we would not lightly disturb. Nevertheless, the blaze had in it once the fire of life; for the quarrel between Zealots and Moderates was something more than a struggle over the precise number of rags that could be patched on to an old garment, as in the famous case of Fra Corrado da Offido, the friend of John of Parma, who for fifty-five years wore the same gown. The impartial historian will neither approve the ideals of the Zealots or give his imprimatur to their methods, nor, on the contrary, will he condemn the Moderates without discrimination. He will, however, discern that, in a dim, unconscious fashion, the Spirituals had grasped a mighty truth, of which the Moderates, with all their greater sanity and more prudent conduct, were profoundly ignorant.

For what was the quarrel? Put in a word, it was this: Should the friars descend from the lofty ideals of their founder to the common dreams of common day? Francis had held before the world the vision splendid. His sons maintained that it was unattainable. This was the policy of Cardinal Ugolini, of Brother Elias,[1]

[1] *Ch. West*, ii. 221.

and the Moderates. We should do wrong if we overwhelmed them with abuse. The majority of the Moderates were conscientious and devout. They were firmly persuaded that they were acting in the true interests of the Church. The ideal, they pleaded, is beyond us; let us reconstruct it on the lines of the attainable. So St. Francis was scarcely in his grave before they whittled away his teaching, and taught that his words were but counsels of perfection.

To alter the Rule was not easy. Francis, foreseeing the efforts which would be made to evade its spirit, had in his last Will strictly forbidden glosses and explanations. The Rule, like the Sermon on the Mount, was to be interpreted literally. The more also that Rome proclaimed the glorification of the saint, exalting him in popular worship and story into a being rather divine than human, the greater the authority of the Rule and its claim to be regarded as a new gospel. But the astute churchmanship of Cardinal Ugolini was equal to the task. In 1231, as Pope Gregory IX.,[1] he pointed out to the chapter that Francis could not bind his successor, and that by a system of third parties—trustees, as we should now call them—the order could hold money and property, and yet keep the letter of the Rule.

[1] *Ch. West*, 26 ff.

The long, weary struggle that followed belongs rather to the history of the Franciscans than to the general story of the Church. But one or two events stand out by their importance from the general dreariness. In 1248 John of Parma, professor of theology in the University of Paris, was elected the head of the order. He determined to bring back the brethren to the forgotten ideal of their founder. For three years he visited on foot and in disguise the various friaries of Europe, remaining in each several days, until he could observe its character, then revealing himself and reforming abuses. Emboldened by 'the river of fire which flowed from his lips,' the Spirituals broke out into fearless denunciation of existing evils and began to circulate apocalyptic prophecies, which they ascribed to the famous Joachim di Fiori (1145-1202). Rome was described as the great whore, the Roman Church as the barren fig-tree, the Empire as the instrument of God which should overthrow a corrupt Church. Joachim had prophesied that in 1260 the dominion of the Holy Ghost, the third age of the Church, should succeed the exhausted dispensations of the Father and the Son. A terrible persecution should separate the wheat from the chaff, and the elect should enter

into quietude and peace. The reign of love, 'an age of lilies' and of 'perfect day,' should begin when old men and youths should become children.

For sixty years these speculations of Joachim had been prized by the Church; popes and theologians had failed to discern their dangerous tendencies. But in 1254 the Spirituals forced them into prominence by their publication at Paris of the famous treatise, *The Eternal Gospel*, the work, as it would seem, of the learned enthusiast Gherardo da Borgo San Donnino. The work met among all classes with unbounded success; yet nothing more revolutionary of the whole order of the Church had ever been penned. In the introduction which it contains to the three undoubted works of Joachim, Gherardo sweeps away the whole sacerdotal system; love would replace all the sacraments of the Church.

The publication of this anarchist volume was the downfall of the Spirituals. They showed that they too had abandoned the ideal of their founder; that they had forsaken right living for the intoxications of prophetism. John of Parma was forced to resign, though allowed to nominate his successor. He chose the saintly Bonaventura, then only thirty-five years of age.

Bonaventura at once consigned Gherardo to the dungeon where, for eighteen years, he lingered until the end came; John of Parma was banished to Rieti. But the rule of Bonaventura was not the triumph of the Conventuals or Moderates. In his controversy with William of St. Amour the saint identified poverty and perfection; he denied that Christ and His apostles had ever held property of any kind. He tried honestly to restrain the growing laxity of the order. He would submit, he said, to be ground to powder if only he could bring back the ideals of St. Francis.

Even Bonaventura could not stop the growing dissension over the question of poverty. For twenty years the quarrel went on, daily becoming more envenomed, until in 1279 Nicholas III. undertook to settle it by the formal declaration known as the bull *Exiit qui Seminat.* The Rule of Francis was declared to be the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; absolute renunciation of possession had been practised by Christ and His apostles. But while ownership was thus denied, usufruct or use might be permitted. The proprietorship of all that the Franciscans enjoyed must be vested in the Roman pontiff, as the trustee of the order. To dispute this happy evasion was to incur excommunication.

The subtleties of this bull did not end the controversy. The consciences of the Spirituals were not satisfied. Poverty, they claimed, as Wyclif claimed in the next generation, was an indispensable note of the true Church. To the modern the idea is unintelligible because unworkable, unless, indeed, by poverty be meant what undoubtedly many of its adherents intended—the voluntary system as practised among modern Nonconformists. The struggle would thus resolve itself, as it resolved itself with Wyclif, into a struggle against endowments. Others, however, were more literal in their claims and obligations. But whatever be the precise nature of the question at issue, we must not withhold our admiration from those who chose rather to rot in perpetual chains or endure even death at the fire than surrender their ideals. So determined were the Moderates to crush the Zealots that in some places they actually ordered the Will of St. Francis to be publicly burnt. The elevation of the hermit Peter Murrone into the Pope Celestine V. gave the martyrs a respite; but the accession of Boniface VIII. added fuel to the flames of strife.[1] Celestine, they maintained, had no right to resign; Boniface was no true Pope. True Pope or not, Boniface was determined

[1] *Ch. West*, ii. 285 ff.

to crush the Spirituals. Some were driven across the seas to find refuge in an island of the Gulf of Corinth. Others, like Jacopone of Todi,[1] were captured and imprisoned 'wound round with chains,' and otherwise tortured.

The reign of Clement V. gave the Spirituals once more a respite. In obedience to his invitation, they laid before the Pope thirty-five indictments against the luxury and corruption of their order; while the new general, Gonsalvo, set to work to pull down the costly buildings and return legacies to donors and heirs. But with the death of Clement a new ground of quarrel arose. John XXII. was not the man to be enthusiastic for poverty (*supra*, p. 32). He determined to settle once for all the two burning questions—the character of the vestments to be worn, and the legality of storing up wine and corn in cellars and granaries. He wound up his bull on the matter with the significant words, 'Great is poverty, but greater is blamelessness, while perfect obedience is the greatest good.' Twenty-four Spirituals who refused to recant were handed over to the Inquisition. Four were burnt at Marseilles (May 1318), the rest were imprisoned for life. Henceforth it was heresy to hold that friars should not possess granaries

[1] *Ch. West*, ii. 227. Gebhart, *op. cit.* 257–276.

and cellars, or to attack under any pretext the property of the Church or its orders.

For the student of the Reformation it is important to understand the new aspect which the quarrel assumed under John. Hitherto it had been a commonplace of the schools that the Pope had no power to dispense with vows, especially those of poverty or chastity. John laid down that henceforth it was heresy, to be punished with burning, to deny his rights, and the Inquisition carried out his orders. Hundreds died at the stake. At Carcassone alone, between 1318 and 1350, one hundred and thirteen were executed, and in 1323, according to Wadding, Franciscan inquisitors alone burned one hundred and fourteen of their brethren. Such persecutions naturally intensified antagonism to the Holy See. The doctrines of *The Eternal Gospel* were revived and became the leading principles of a new sect. The Roman Church was 'the carnal Church,' the 'Whore of Babylon,' 'the Synagogue of Satan'; the Pope was 'Antichrist'; the sacraments no longer needful for salvation, for the Holy Ghost would soon usher in a new age, when the world should be ruled by poverty and love.[1]

[1] Wyclif did not advocate this last idea. But one of the difficulties of his life is to settle whether or not he adopted

In his persecution of the Spirituals John had been assisted by Michael of Casena, the General of the order, who had determined to reduce all to obedience. But the logical intellect of John, carrying out with thorough worldliness the principles of his bulls to their conclusions, soon involved the Pope in a disastrous struggle with Casena and the Franciscans as a body. In 1322 John laid before his prelates and doctors the question whether or not the assertion that Christ and His apostles possessed nothing, either individually or in common, was not a heresy. He obtained the answer which an enormously wealthy vicar of Christ would desire—which wealthy bishops, who claimed to be the successors of the apostles, might be expected to furnish. Almost unanimously—eight Franciscans alone excepted—John was advised that both Christ and His apostles had owned property. At a chapter general held at Perugia (May 30, 1322) the Franciscans appealed to Christendom at large. They maintained that the absolute poverty of

much of his familiar phraseology from the Spirituals, and if so, to what extent in insular England, remote from this great struggle, it was recognised as such. Nothing is more difficult than to determine what we may call the current small coin of theology in any age, and the precise face-value of that coin in different ages—its mint, superscription, etc. Wyclif's 'Antichrist' will serve as an example. See also p. 154, note 3.

Christ was the accepted doctrine of the Church. In Dec. 1322 and Nov. 1323, John replied. With shrewd but remorseless logic, he annulled that happy evasion, the trusteeship of Rome for the order. It was absurd, he said, to speak of Rome as owning the eggs and cheese the friars ate; henceforth they must own their property themselves. To hold that Christ or His apostles possessed no property was a perversion of Scripture—heresy itself. At this stage the quarrel passed into politics. Lewis of Bavaria took up the matter as a convenient weapon. In the Nuremburg Protest (Dec. 18, 1323), and later in the Protest of Sachsenhausen (May 1324)—a document extensively copied from the writings of the famous Spiritual, John Peter Olivi[1]—he laid down that, as the head of the Empire, his duty called him to maintain the purity of the faith against a Pope who was a heretic. He demanded, therefore, the assembling of a General Council.

The poverty of Christ was thus launched on the world as a European question. But men realised that beneath this academic issue there lay involved two principles of importance. The first struck at the worldliness of the representatives of the apostles and the existence of

[1] Lea, iii. 138 n. Milman, vii. 351–3.

all Church endowments. The second was a direct challenge to the papal claim to be the infallible dictator of right and wrong, with powers of binding and loosing at will. The leaders in this crusade were Michael of Casena and William of Ockham. In his *Contra Errores Papæ* Michael denounced the utterances of John as heresies, and appealed 'to the universal Church and a General Council, which in faith and morals is superior to the Pope, since a pope can err in faith and morals, as many Roman popes have fallen from the faith, but the universal Church cannot err, and a council representing the universal Church is also free from error.' In a flood of scholastic subtleties, Ockham pursued the same theme to further conclusions. The Pope may err, a General Council may err, the doctors of the Church may err; only Holy Scripture and the beliefs of the Church are of universal validity, and with these to guide him the meanest peasant may know the truth.[1]

We do not propose to follow the quarrel through its various stages; how Lewis tried the Pope, pronounced him a heretic for denying the poverty of Christ, burnt John in effigy, and elected in his place as antipope a Franciscan, formerly married, whose wife, it was said, came forward after years

[1] Compare Wyclif's teaching, p. 192.

of absence and claimed once more her husband; how Lewis returned to Munich carrying his politicians and Franciscans with him, but abandoning to the Inquisition his antipope and Ghibelline cities, like Todi, that had trusted in him.[1] Nor shall we follow the wanderings of Michael and Ockham, nor enter further into the war of manifestoes of portentous length, which now slumber undisturbed in the pages of Goldast. The victory, such as it was, seemed to rest with John. The Spirituals, who had formed themselves into a number of sects,—some of them with clergy and bishops of their own, whose missionaries penetrated to the Chazars of the Crimea and the Muslim of Egypt and Syria,[2]—were crushed by the Inquisition. Michael of Casena was deposed, the order of St. Francis purged, and Lewis became a suitor at the Pope's feet for a pardon, which the haughty old man refused to give.

But in reality the victory lay elsewhere. The flood of political and religious controversy, of which the Papacy and its claims had formed the ground of attack and defence, had awakened Europe to the criticism of an institution for generations accepted as divine. Belief in the infallibility of the Papacy was gone, destroyed

[1] Lea, iii. 149–151. [2] *Ibid.* iii. 167.

as much by John XXII. himself[1] as by the attacks of the heretics. Henceforth the more conservative looked to a General Council, the more revolutionary to the plans of Marsiglio and Ockham.

In Nov. 1342 Michael of Casena passed away, declaring in his latest effort that John was a heretic, and his successors were heretics. A few years later William of Ockham, the last of the remarkable group that had for years made Munich the head centre of revolt, finished his course. These men, it might appear, left no successors; the Popes remained on secure at Avignon. In reality, in the next generation their work was taken up under a changed environment, with different objects, another angle of vision, by an even greater iconoclast. In many respects Wyclif sums up in himself the movements and forces, in themselves largely contradictory, which had gathered round Lewis of Bavaria for the attack of their common foe.

[1] I have said nothing of John's famous heresy concerning Retardation of the Beatific Vision (Lea, iii. 590-5). John only saved himself from being pronounced heretical by the University of Paris and King Philip de Valois of France by a timely and mysterious deathbed recantation (Dec. 2, 1234) or bull promulgated (Dec. 5) after his decease, in which he submitted himself to the judgment of the Church. Michael and Ockham were not slow to fasten on this very awkward incident, over which Pastor maintains a wise silence. As a theological speculation, I should imagine the Pope was correct; only his dogmas would have struck a fatal blow at the current Mariolatry, and invocation of "retarded" saints.

CHAPTER III

WYCLIF AND THE SCHOOLMEN

Great as Wyclif was we do not know him yet as we should. That he influenced his time is on all sides conceded; how he influenced it nobody precisely knows.—BUDDENSIEG (1883).

§ 2. For *sources*, etc., of Wyclif, see next chapter.

§ 3. For the Oxford of Wyclif's day, see RASHDALL, *Univs. of Europe in M.A.*, vol. ii., and for student life in the M.A., *ibid.* c. xiv. For information *re* Balliol, add the important *Historical MSS. Commission*, 1874, Report by RILEY, pp. 442–451. For Merton, see BRODRICK, *Memorials of Merton* (1885) (needs care over "Merton men"), and for general information, LYTE, *Hist. Univ. Oxford*, and the indispensable WOOD, *Annals*; *Hist. City Oxford* (New Eds. Oxford Historical Soc.). For the friars at Oxford: BREWER, *Monumenta Franciscana* (R.S.), and the valuable LITTLE, *Grey Friars at Oxford* (1892). For the Oxford of Rich, see the able biography, WILFRID WALLACE, *St. Edmund of Canterbury* (1893); also *Collectanea* (Oxford Historical Soc., 1885), ii. 138–192. For Fitzralph, see POOLE, *Dict. Nat. Biog.* with chronology corrected, *De Dom. Div.*, xxxv-viii. For the dispute of 1311–13, add *Collectanea*, ii. 195–273.

§ 4. For "authorities" *re* Scholasticism in general, see my *Church West in M.A.*, i., c. vi.; ii., c. vii. Add for the present chapter, BREWER, *Mon. Francis*, i. liii-lix.; RASHDALL, *op. cit.* ii., c. xii. § 7. For the life of Duns, see LITTLE, *op. cit.*, correcting in some details RIGG in *Dict. Nat. Biog.* For Ockham, see *supra*, p. 64. For Bradwardine, STEPHENS, in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, chiefly from Life by SAVILE; *De Causa Dei* (1618). For Wyclif's realism, DZIEWICKI, Preface to *De Logica*, ii., also iii., xxxvi-xxxviii. The theology of the Schoolmen is dealt with by BANKS, *Development of Doctrine*, ii. 55–62, 89–100, a companion work to the present. See also Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 229–269.

WYCLIF AND THE SCHOOLMEN

I

THE moral power of the Papacy and its supremacy over the conscience of men perished in the captivity at Avignon.[1] Nowhere was that fall more complete than in England. For Rome had succeeded in allying against herself all the forces of patriotism and nationalism both in Church and State. Never was victory purchased more dearly than when Innocent forced John to receive his kingdom as a papal fief, and to pay the annual tribute of a thousand marks. If, during the thirteenth century, the Papacy succeeded in maintaining her claims, she only did so by an intolerable alliance with the sovereign against the people. Worthless monarchs like Henry III. might grovel in the dust, and agree on the division of the plunder which they wrung from the people; and Rome in her folly mistook the stricken acquiescence of the people for

[1] This section is a summary for the convenience of the reader's memory of the argument in c. i., so far as it affects Wyclif.

content. But the papal exactions were driving even the most submissive of English churchmen into opposition to her claims. A new national party sprang into existence, in which we find the opponents of the misgovernment of the king making common cause with the victims of the rapacity of the popes. The champion of the one was Simon de Montfort; of the other Robert Grosseteste. Both alike had seemed to fail: Montfort stricken down on the field of Evesham; Grosseteste had passed away conscious of the skilful indifference with which the curia had treated his protest. Both alike had really succeeded; their works followed them. For when Earl Simon, after his victory at Lewes, had, for the first time in the history of the nation, summoned not only knights of the shire, but two citizens from every borough to sit beside the barons and ecclesiastics in his Parliament at Westminster, he had called into being a power which carried on the struggle after the great patriot had passed away. The memory also of Grosseteste's impeachment of the papal rapacity lived on in the resistance of Parliaments to the papal claims. The fourteenth century opened with the union of king and people in the consciousness of the new nationalism, and the determination to cut off the sources of abuse.

Throughout the fourteenth century the student will discern two movements going on in England, both tending in the same direction, though with different designs; both temporarily defeated, both preparing the way for future triumphs. The one attack was directed against the temporal and political power of the clergy, the other against the dogmas and superstitions of the Church. On all sides we discern signs of revolt, a fear lest the Church should become too strong for the State, a desire to deliver religion from a degrading materialism. The two movements, though finally they became separate and even opposed, were at first united. The leader in the struggle was John Wyclif.

II

"On most of us the dim image of Wyclif[1] looks down like the portrait of the first of a long line of kings, without personality or expression—he is the first of the reformers." This judgment of Shirley is unfortunately still too true, despite fifty years' efforts to make up for the neglect of centuries. Almost every particular in the life of Wyclif is the occasion

[1] Matthew (*Acad.*, June 1884) has shown that the first syllable is "Wy" (water) not "Wic" (= Wick). According to Buddensieg there are thirty-one ways in which his name is spelt. Wyclif or Wycliffe is a matter of indifference.

of controversy; over his earlier years there hangs a more than medieval obscurity; while the vague chronology is in marked contrast to our exact knowledge of his teaching. That he was a Yorkshireman is certain; born at—at least he 'drew his origin' from—Wyclif-on-Tees[1] at a date unknown, but, in our opinion, nearer 1330 than 1320;[2] a scion, perhaps the head, of a proud but poor family—the manor of Wyclif was but 720 acres—since extinct, that clung tenaciously to the Roman Church in the years of triumph of the Reformer's doctrines. On entering Oxford, Wyclif would attach himself to the college of the Northern Nation, founded half a century previously (1261) by the neighbouring family of Balliol of Barnard Castle.

Wyclif's life at Oxford is worse than a blank; it is a puzzle in identity. For there were at the University at that time two other John Wyclifs with whom, it would appear, the Reformer has been grievously confused. The first is an 'almonry boy' at Queen's, of whom all that we know is that in 1371 he was studying his Latin grammar. His shadowy form has led many astray, and flits through the rooms at Queen's—rent always in arrears—at various

[1] Leland, *Collectanea*, i. pt. ii. p. 329.

[2] For the early life, etc., of Wyclif, see Appendix C.

dates between 1363 and 1380. The second John Wyclif is more substantial, a 'portionist' of Merton, for whose confusion with the Reformer historians have less excuse. For in "Wyclif's time," as Dr. Poole has pointed out, "Balliol and Merton formed the opposite poles of the academical world," the headquarters respectively of the Northern and Southern Nations; and Merton, as we know from Wood, refused, both in 1334 and afterwards, to elect Northern scholars into their society. The third John Wyclif, a certain John Wyclif or Whitclif of Mayfield, is an even more troublesome double, not merely of the Reformer but of the portionist of Merton, with whom he is probably one and the same.[1]

In 1360, or possibly earlier, Wyclif was elected the Master of Balliol, not at that time the lucrative honour of later days. This position he resigned shortly after he had been presented (May 16, 1361) to the college living of Fillingham in Lincolnshire, 'value thirty marks.'[2] The next incident in his life is one of the ironies of history. In 1362 the University of Oxford petitioned Urban v. to exercise the papal power of "provision" by granting Wyclif

[1] For the Three Wyclifs, see App. D.

[2] In July 1361 Wyclif still signs himself Master.

'a canonry and dignity of York, notwithstanding that he holds the church of Fillingham.'[1] The Pope granted instead the prebend of Aust in the collegiate church of Westbury-on-Trym, near Bristol. For the next few years the Reformer disappears from sight, unless, indeed, he be the John Wyclif or Whitclif who was nominated by Archbp. Islip warden of Canterbury in a deed dated 'Mayfield, Dec. 9, 1365.' This hall had been founded (Ap. 1363) to repair the ravages of the Black Death among the clergy by preparing candidates of scanty learning and low social status. The identification has this much in its favour, that the work at the new foundation would fit in exactly with what we know in later life to have been the views of the founder of the Biblemen. Unfortunately for the experiment, Islip had involved it in the endless conflict between seculars and regulars. After trying in vain to bring together priests and monks in one foundation, Islip expelled the monks. His successor, Archbp. Langham, an ex-abbot of Westminster (March 1367), showed his different sympathies. He drove out the seculars, with this Wyclif at their head, and handed over

[1] Bliss, *Cal. Papal Registers Petitions*, i. 390. Granted '8 Kal. Dec.,' 1362.

the hall to the monks of Christ Church, of which College it now forms a part. The warden's appeal to Avignon was rejected after the usual delay (1371); he had, in fact, no good standpoint at law.

The identity of the Reformer with the warden of Canterbury is a matter of dispute, and should, we think, be rejected.[1] For the warden was a scholar or, as we should now say, a fellow, in the house[2] which Wyclif, ex-master of Balliol, could scarcely have been; while other evidence points to the warden being John Wyclif of Mayfield. In 1368 we are, however, once more on firm ground. In the registers of the see of Lincoln we find that licence was granted by Bp. Buckingham to 'Master John de Wyclif that he might absent himself from his church for the space of two years, to devote himself to the study of letters in the University.' Later on in the same year Wyclif exchanged his Lincolnshire rectory for that of Ludgershall in Buckinghamshire. Its nearness to Oxford—but sixteen miles—compensated Wyclif for its lesser income.

In 1372 Wyclif finished the sixteen years'

[1] See App. E.

[2] *Register of Langham* (Vaughan, 553), 'directo ad John Wyclif et *ceteros scolares* Aulae Cant.' But this should not be pressed too much.

course for the degree in divinity (S.T.M.) and acquired the right of delivering lectures on theology. In 1373 we come across another curious incident. The Pope granted to Wyclif, his 'dilectissimo filio,' a canonry of Lincoln, 'while retaining the canonry and prebend of Aust.' The words seem to indicate Wyclif's acceptance of Westbury, and a local tradition points out the rooms that he occupied in the College (to-day a tenement); but no trace can now be found of his institution. The King's confirmation is dated November 6, 1375, and, according to the registers, the prebend was conferred a few days later upon another, a certain Robert of Farrington. The benefice at Lincoln which Wyclif accepted was afterwards, as Wyclif himself tells us,[1] taken from him by Gregory XI. and bestowed on a foreigner, on his refusal, or delay, to pay the firstfruits of £45. Amid many uncertainties one thing is clear. The great quarrel had evidently not yet begun; while Wyclif's objection to pluralities would seem to have been of later growth. We must own also that, until Lutterworth, Wyclif was probably an absentee rector. But the silence of his enemies is proof that he made ample provision for the cure of souls.

[1] Loserth, *Op. Evang.*, xxx. (a work never finished).

In 1374 Wyclif at last definitely emerges into full public view, first as a commissioner at Bruges, and then as the leader of the nation in its struggle with Rome. Anticipating his services at Bruges the Crown, taking advantage of the minority of the patron, rewarded him (1374) with the rectory of Lutterworth, of the value of £26 per annum.[1] There, on the 31st of December 1384, after ten years of life so full and stirring that history can find few parallels, the great Reformer entered into rest.[2]

If the details of the life of Wyclif are obscure, the source of his influence is clear. The importance of his attack upon the mediaeval Church lay in the fact that for the first time the assault was conducted, not by an obscure fanatic, but by the foremost schoolman of his age—'the flower,' even his enemies owned, 'of Oxford scholarship,'—at a time when the decay of Paris had left Oxford without a rival. The first of the reformers was, in fact, the last of the schoolmen, according to Knighton, 'in philosophy second to none, in the training of the schools without a rival.' Even Arundel acknowledged to Thorpe: 'Wyclif, your author, was a great clerk, and many men

[1] Vaughan, 180 n.

[2] For the chronology of Wyclif, see App. F.

held him a perfect liver.'[1] An unrevised notebook of some of his lectures, evidently taken down by one of his pupils, has come down to us, and amazes the reader by its "accumulated stores of learning from every field of human knowledge, and the mastery displayed of the entire Bible."[2]

Equally clear with the source of his influence is the general development of his teaching. From subtle disputations Wyclif passed, like William of Ockham, into politics. He was the brains of the party who sought in Parliament and elsewhere to resist the papal claims. Hitherto reformers had attempted to accomplish their purposes from within, and would have resisted outside interference. Wyclif introduced a new thing into the medieval world by calling upon the State to reform an unwilling clergy. Next he laboured to effect the revival of religious life by the restoration of simple preaching, 'a humble and homely proclamation of the gospel,' and the distribution to the people of the Word of God. He struck hard at the current methods of the pulpit, the endless logical distinctions and divisions, 'the subtle hair-splitting which the apostles

[1] See *Arbers' Eng. Garner*, vi. 62-64 (also note p. 242 *infra*).

[2] Beer, *De Compos. Hominis*, Pref. xvii. (the notebook in question). See also the indices of quotations, etc.

would have despised,' the rhetoric, legends, and poetry which men substituted for the bread of life. Finally he felt that the souls of men were being sacrificed to an overgrown sacramental system, at the roots of which he struck by his attack on the doctrine of transubstantiation. In all these aspects—Schoolman, Politician, Preacher, and Reformer—Wyclif was the foremost man of his age, the range of whose activities was not less remarkable than the energy with which he pursued his aims.

III

Of Wyclif's life at Oxford we know nothing. His writings, in this matter, alas! are singularly lacking in personal reference. This is the more to be regretted when we remember that Wyclif's residence at the university covered more than a generation. The Reformer would be in Oxford in the year of the great Plague (1349), when, under the blazing July sun, death reigned in the noisome alleys and crowded halls. The marvel is that he survived. For if, as Professor Sedgwick once remarked, the "dirt was sublime in former years," it was "sublimest," perhaps, in the great university, too "sublime" even for the medieval nose. From a royal letter to the sheriff in 1300, we learn that 'the air is so corrupted and infected' by the filth in the

streets that 'an abominable loathing is diffused among the aforesaid masters and scholars.'

Wyclif would be at Oxford also at the 'Great Slaughter' of 1354, a riot which broke out in a tavern over the quality of the wine. For "on Tuesday, February 10th,"—we quote the lively narrative of Anthony Wood[1]—

"being the feast of S. Scolastica the Virgin, came Walter de Springheuse and other clerks to the tavern called Swydlestock [being now the Mermaid tavern at Quatrevois], and there, calling for wine, John de Croydon, the vintner, brought them some; but they, disliking it, as it would seem, and he avouching it to be good, several snappish words passed between them. At length, the vintner giving them stubborn and saucy language, they threw the wine vessel at his head."

Within a few hours the bell of St. Martin's was summoning "town" to the rescue, while the bell of St. Mary's called "gown" to arms. The first day's scrimmage was bloodless. On the following morning the students were in the schools, and all seemed peaceful; but at dinner-time (11 a.m.), as "gown" was disporting itself in the fields of Beaumont, eighty men assembled at St. Giles', and began the attack with bows and arrows. "Gown" tried to shut the gates of the city, for two thousand armed rustics were already pouring in, carrying a black flag, and crying 'slay, slay! havoc, havoc! smite fast!

[1] *Annals*, i. 456.

give good blows!' By the close of the day "town" had won; twenty halls had been pillaged and burnt, chaplains flayed, and "gown" driven headlong from the city, save only the students of Merton, safe behind their solid walls. When the friars, forgetting in the common danger their feud with the seculars, came to the rescue, not with carnal weapons, but bearing the host and chanting a litany for peace, their crucifix was dashed to the ground.

Wyclif also would witness the subsequent triumph of "gown," when the mayor and bailiff were sent to the Marshalsea, and an enormous fine imposed of £250—two shillings per head of the population. The assize of bread, wine and ale, weights, measures, the cleansing and paving of streets, in fact all self-government was taken away by the Crown from the humbled city and given to the university. Henceforth the inhabitants of Oxford were helots, hewers of wood and drawers of water. Their town was mapped out into districts. Over each of these, two artists and one doctor of theology were appointed as inquisitors, to hold annual investigation into the morals of the inhabitants.[1]

[1] On the morals of the university, see App. G.

For the effect of the Great Slaughter on Oxford Markets, see *Collectanea*, ii. 52-3.

Every year on the anniversary of the "great slaughter" the mayor and sixty citizens were to perform penance at St. Mary's, and each to offer 'one penny' at the high altar—a penance, we note, that was not abolished until 1825. But of these things Wyclif tells us nothing.

The Oxford of Wyclif was neither the Oxford of an earlier age nor the stately university of later times. The Oxford of Edmund Rich had already vanished. The thousands of poor scholars huddled in bare lodging-houses, clustering round teachers as poor as themselves, 'yellow beaks' of twelve, and grey beards over seventy, talking almost every dialect of Europe, perpetually drinking, dicing, or breaking heads in the battle of 'nations,' but whose turbulence and stir was the turbulence and stir of life, of democracy first discovering itself,—had given place to a more orderly and wealthy university; more learned, perhaps, though with far less of that passionate thirst for knowledge which had once distinguished it. Every scholar was now obliged to live in a hall or hostel under the care of some member of the university. At one time the number of such halls was over three hundred, —wooden buildings built in two stories round cloistered courts, with brewhouse, pigsties, stables,

and scanty library. But the new Oxford, so familiar to us to-day, was already rising in the six endowed colleges—University (1249), Balliol (1261), Merton (1263), Exeter (1314), Oriel (1324), and Queen's (1341),—while Bishop Wykeham's stately foundation of the new college of St. Mary (1379) was destined to sweep away halls by the score. But let not the reader be deceived by a name. Even in the colleges fellows shared their bedrooms with two or three chamber companions; a separate bed was the luxury of the few. Their windows, without glass, were closed with wooden shutters, their floors were strewed with rushes to fight the cold. Chimneys and fires were of course unknown. Combination rooms were yet to be devised. For the Master's lodge we must wait a couple of centuries; at Balliol, the highest dream of the Master would be a room to himself. Two meals a day, dinner at eleven and supper at five, were the usual repasts. The allowances for fellows varied from eight to eighteenpence a week. With meat at about a farthing a pound, butter and cheese at a halfpenny, men would need a penny a day to live.[1] The rest could be spent on candles—at twopence the pound, a luxury of the few

[1] For prices in 1280, see *Collectanea*, ii. 120.

—books or beer. But of Chaucer's 'thredbare' 'Clerk of Oxenford' we read—

> But all that he mighte of his frends hente
> On bookes and on lerning he it spente;
> For him was lever have at his beddes heede
> A twenty bokes, clothed in black or reede
> Of Aristotle and his philosophie
> Then robes riche, or fithel or gay sautrie.

When Wyclif went to Oxford, the curse of wealth, or rather of expense, was already cutting off the university from the life of the nation. The old democracy, when knowledge alone made the 'master,' and to know more than his fellows was a man's sole claim to be a 'regent' in the schools, was already a thing of the past. Edmund Rich, when offered fees, had flung them down on the window ledge; 'ashes to ashes,' he cried, 'and dust to dust.' The new Oxford was learning better. She canonised Edmund, but took care not to follow his example. The expense of the university, in fact, had become as great as, if not greater than to-day. The chief difficulty in obtaining a degree was the financial outlay, the course of seven, ten, or sixteen years, according to faculty. To crown all, there were the feasts on the night before 'inception,' costing, according to the rank of the candidate, from ten marks to seventy pounds; not to mention the

suits of clothes for the stationers, buckskin gloves and twenty shillings for each of the two bedels.[1] There was, alas! but one way of finance, unless, indeed, you visited the Lombards. You must let the Pope "provide" you with a benefice, both while you studied and after you had taken your degree. From 1322 onwards, until the practice was spoilt by the *Statutes of Provisors*, the university forwarded to the Pope a *rotulus nominandorum*, or list of graduates, for whom he must find a career.[2] Lest there should be any mistake on the matter, the benefices were named, and the sums expected. Even Wyclif, as we have seen, though in later years he repented him of the evil, had not scrupled to implore such "provision," that thereby he might continue his studies. In its earlier days the university had stood for "the protest of the lay spirit." Now Oxford was merely the ordinary door to clerical preferment.

Owing to the growing expense, and the Black

[1] See further, Wylie, iii. 418; Lyte, 225; Little, 50, 51. In 1336 Benedict XII. tried in vain to curtail the expense. Friars 'were not to spend in food and drink, except once only, more than would suffice for the moderate refection of the convent or place where such inceptions were held.'

[2] The reader will best see how the system worked by turning over the pages of *The Cal. Papal Registers, Petitions*, i. (ed. Bliss, R.S.)

Death, Oxford could no longer boast of her former students. The medieval numbers, it is true, have been enormously misrepresented. Wyclif's statement that 'once there were sixty thousand students'—unless, indeed, it be the mistake of a copyist—would lead us to suspect an innate faculty for exaggeration, of which we shall notice traces elsewhere in his writings. Wyclif, however, was not alone. According to Gascoigne, 'before the Great Plague there had been thirty thousand.' But juggling with figures was a medieval weakness. As Arabic numerals were not yet in common use, addition was difficult; imagination, at anyrate, hard to check. Even Wyclif's estimate that in his own day (1379) the students had dwindled to three thousand, should really be divided by half.[1]

In another respect also Oxford had changed. Instead of the struggle of the 'nations'—they had been suppressed in 1274, leaving behind them as their chief memory the two proctors, one 'Australis' and one 'Borealis'—we find the even fiercer strife of seculars and regulars. In the early university,—the university 'before which,' in 1185, Giraldus Cambrensis 'resolved to read,' as he tells us, his work *Typographia Hibernica*, —'the clergy of England flourished and excelled

[1] For the numbers, see Appendix H.

in clerkship'; but they were all seculars. In its origin the university was a secular institution which owed nothing save antagonism to monasticism and the regulars.[1] But much had happened since the visit of the Welshman. For on the 15th August 1220 the Dominicans had arrived at Oxford and established themselves in the heart of the Jewry. With rare insight, they had discerned the beginning of revolt against authority; they would win back the allegiance of the university to orthodoxy. They were soon surrounded by eager disciples.

But the influence of the Dominicans was eclipsed by the fame of their successors. On Tuesday, 10th September 1224, the Franciscans landed at Dover. Before the end of the month they had set out for Oxford. There they started lectures 'in a house in the parish of St. Ebb's.' Next came the Carmelites, White Friars (1256), for whom in 1317 the old palace of Beaumont, on the north-west side of the walls, was turned into a convent; while in 1268 the Augustinians settled on the site now occupied by Wadham. Within a few years the Grey Friars carried all before them. Agnellus their leader, though, in the words of Wood, "he never smelt of an academy or tasted of humane learning," frankly recognised

[1] See *Ch. West*, ii. 254.

its value. He sent, out of his poverty, £10 to Rome to buy a copy of the *Decretals*. His second step was of even greater importance. 'Friar Agnellus caused a school of sufficiently decent appearance to be built on the site on which the friars had settled, and induced Robert Grosseteste, of holy memory, to lecture to them there; and under him they made extraordinary progress in sermons, as well as in subtle moral themes suitable for preaching.'[1] The result was remarkable. From their school at Oxford the Grey Friars gave to the world its acknowledged leaders in thought and speculation. "Lyons, Paris, and Cologne were indebted for their first professors to the English Franciscans. Foreigners were sent to the English school as superior to all others. For the first time since its existence, Oxford rose to a position second not even to Paris itself. The three schoolmen of the most profound and original genius—Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and Ockham—were trained within its walls."[2]

In their conquest of the university the friars had been supported by popular sympathy. They owed something also to the presence of other regulars. For as students would no longer go to the monasteries, the monasteries had deemed it

[1] *Mon. Francis.*, i. 37.

[2] Brewer, *Mon. Francis.*, i. p. lxxxi.

wise to go to the students. In 1289 a chapter general of the Benedictines at Avignon imposed a levy of twopence in the mark on all the revenues of their order for the purpose of building a hall at Oxford for their monks. They established themselves in Gloucester Hall, originally built by John Giffard, lord of Brimsfield, for thirteen monks from the great monastery of St. Peter at Gloucester. The other orders, Cistercians and Augustinian canons, soon found it advisable to follow their example.[1] To the intellectual life of Oxford the monks contributed absolutely nothing. No schoolman or theologian hailed from their ranks. At Oxford, as in the nation at large, the monasteries were isolated institutions, cut off from the great world by more than their walls, without part or lot in the real life of the country. Their one object in coming to Oxford at all would seem to have been to obtain a supply of canonists and lawyers to look after the vast legal interests of their orders. Nevertheless, by their presence they added fuel to the bitter strife of regulars and seculars.

The seculars did not intend that the university which they had created should thus be stolen from them without a struggle. The storm was not long in bursting. At Paris, in 1252, it rent

[1] Details in Wood, *Oxford*, ii. 228–89.

the university in sunder.[1] At Oxford the first outbreak was less disastrous. The grounds of conflict were twofold. On the one hand, especially at Paris, there was the question of obedience to the university, a university the overwhelming proportion of which were seculars and artists. In England the second contention was of more importance. The friars claimed to study theology without graduating in arts. The university insisted that its first duty was to give men a 'liberal' education. Before specialising for any particular profession they must take their degrees in the common elements of culture. The friars objected; their business was not to take degrees, but to save men by theology and preaching. So they attempted a bold stroke. They requested (Feb. 1252) a grace 'to allow Friar Thomas of York to ascend the chair of ordinary regent in Holy Scripture' without graduating in arts. In spite of the pleadings of Adam Marsh[2] for his order, the university decided that henceforth no one should be admitted to lecture on theology who had not first taken his degree as Master in Arts. The measure was qualified by reserving to the chancellor and regents a dispensing power. For fifty years the compromise worked smoothly;

[1] Told in Rashdall, i. 345–92. Cf. Lea, *Inquis.*, i. 280–88.
[2] *Mon. Francis.*, i. 338, 346–9.

but in 1303 the conflict once more broke out. The university began to refuse dispensing graces. In 1311 they further ordained that no friar should lecture on the Bible unless he had first taken the university degree of Bachelor in Theology.

"History," writes Dr. Jessopp, "is the science which teaches us to see the throbbing life of the present in the throbbing life of the past." Let us attempt the task over this dispute. In this matter the friars were the Nonconformists of the Middle Ages. The Nonconformist ministers to-day claim, like the friars, to study theology without graduating in arts; Nonconformist colleges maintain, like the Oxford friaries, that their first business is to turn out preachers. The Anglican clergy, on the other hand, are usually "artists" who may or may not have proceeded to theology. On the second matter, again, the sympathies of Nonconformists will be with the friars; for the university degree of Bachelor in Theology was taken by lecturing on that marvellous medieval work, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, a handbook in which the Bible played but a secondary part to scholastic philosophy. The friars, on the other hand, claimed that the exegetical study of the Bible was a better preparation than any *Sentences* for the duties of preacher and pastor. We may further note our surprise that Wyclif, whose

sympathies in this matter must have been with the friars, should have become in later life their bitterest enemy. But the issues and controversies of the age were curiously involved (p. 217, *infra*).

Throughout the fourteenth century the conflict was incessant. When one dispute was settled another was started. The custom of the friars of obtaining graces by means of letters from influential people passed into a more bitter argument as to the age at which friars might admit novices to their order. 'These are the names,' ran a university proclamation of 1368,

'of the wax-doctors who seek to extort graces from the university by means of letters of lords sealed with wax, or because they run from hard study, as wax runs from the face of the fire. Be it known that such wax-doctors are always of the Mendicant orders, the cause whereof we have found. For by apples and drink, as the people say, they draw boys to their religion, and do not instruct them after their profession as their age demands, but let them wander about begging.'[1]

In this struggle of Oxford with the Mendicants a leading part was taken by one to whom Wyclif was profoundly indebted. This was the famous Richard Fitzralph, commonly known as 'Armachanus,' Wyclif's uncanonised 'Saint Richard.'[2] Fitzralph, a native of Louth, in Ireland, had studied at Oxford at Wyclif's

[1] Little, 42. Cf. Wyclif, Matt., 68 *et passim*.
[2] Matt., 128, 507. *Lat. Serm.*, iii. 311.

college of Balliol, of which in 1325 he signs himself an ex-fellow. In 1333 he had been elected chancellor of the university. His promotion, owing to his favour with Avignon, was rapid. In July 1347 he was consecrated Archbishop of Armagh. In 1350 we find him at Avignon addressing the Pope (July 5) on the misdeeds of the friars. But over this matter he seems to have acted merely as the spokesman for parties in England. His own relations with the friars were still of the friendliest, and the business which had taken him to the Papal Court was not connected with the dispute. In 1356 he quitted Ireland and came to London. There he found a discussion in progress on the well-worn theme of the 'Poverty of Christ.' Fitzralph, with the instincts of a popular preacher, at once joined in the fray. In a series of sermons at St. Paul's Cross he maintained that mendicancy had no warrant in Scripture. The friars in their anger accused him to the Pope, and Fitzralph was cited to Avignon. There, on November 8, 1357, he preached his famous sermon before Innocent VI. against the friars and all their ways.[1] A commission of four

[1] *Defensorium Curatorum*, in Brown's *Fascic.*, ii. 466–86. A short summary in Old English, by John of Trevisa, is in *Mon. Francis.*, ii. 276-7.

cardinals was appointed to inquire into the matter, but before judgment was given Fitzralph died (November 1360). The friars won their suit, 'owing,' wails Walsingham,[1] 'to their lavish use of money in the Curia'; but others were found to take up the mantle that had fallen from the Archbishop's shoulders.

Wyclif's indebtedness to Fitzralph was twofold. In his early years he probably did not agree with Fitzralph's denunciation of the friars.[2] But after his quarrel with the Papacy (1378), he went farther even than Fitzralph himself in his scorn and abuse of the Mendicants. But before this quarrel Wyclif had adopted and enlarged a work of Fitzralph, entitled *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, written by the Archbishop between 1353 and 1356. This work, the title of which reflects the great Franciscan controversy out of which it arose, is really a treatise on the familiar medieval idea of 'lordship' or 'dominion.' A comparison of the treatise with the two great works of Wyclif, *De Dominio Divino* and *De Civili Dominio*, shows conclusively "that Wyclif has added no essential element to the doctrine which he read in the work of his predecessor. All he has done —this in the *De Civ. Dom.*—is to carry the inferences logically deducible from that doctrine

[1] Wals., i. 285. *Rot. Parl.*, ii. 290. [2] *Infra*, p. 164.

very much farther than the purpose of Fitzralph's treatise required him (F.) to pursue them, and very much farther than it is likely Fitzralph would have pursued them."[1]

Such was the Oxford that Wyclif entered, and of which he soon became the leading spirit. The palmy days of the regulars were over; the seculars, on the other hand, were regaining their old power. Though still respectable and learned, the friars were living on the past—on the labours and fame of Bacon, Duns, Ockham, and others. The new leaders of the university, Bradwardine, Fitzralph, Wyclif, and his associates, were seculars. Merton alone was giving to the university a distinguished band of secular scholars, among whom we mark the names of such prominent followers of Wyclif as Aston (p. 233), Rugge

[1] Poole, *De Dom. Div.*, xlviii. Fitzralph's *De Paup. Salvatoris* has been printed by Poole (Wyclif Soc., 1890, No. 14), *i.e.* Books i.–iv. For analysis of its contents, see *ibid.* xxxvii.–xlvi. The indebtedness of Wyclif was noticed by his opponents, Woodford and Walden (*ibid.* xlvii.). Two illustrations of indebtedness must suffice:—(*a*) 'Lordship is founded on grace, and without grace there is no lordship' (Fitzralph, Bk. ii. cc. vi.–viii., see Wyclif, p. 160 *infra*); (*b*) Fitzralph, like Wyclif, distinguishes, though more clearly, 'lordship' from "*property* which it does not necessarily involve, the *right of using*, which it includes, but which does not necessarily include it, and *possession*, which is the immediate result of *lordship*" (Poole *De Dom. Civ.*, xxxvii.).

(p. 188), and James.[1] To oppose these men the friars could only rely on their past, unless, indeed, their enemies should stumble into some heresy which would give them the support of the Church. This was, in fact, the very thing that happened. But the issue of their struggle with Wyclif was not the triumph of the Regulars, but the downfall of Oxford itself.

IV

For the right understanding of Wyclif's influence it is needful that we glance briefly at Wyclif's place in the series of Schoolmen. With the life and teaching of Thomas Aquinas, the glory of the Dominicans, we have dealt elsewhere.[2] Nor could the 'Doctor Angelicus' find a place in any work on the "Dawn of the Reformation." He belongs essentially to the medieval Church, of whose teaching he will ever remain the most perfect example. The student, especially in the days when Leo XIII. is urging "the return to Thomas," should understand his significance. Thomas had shown that religion is rational, and that reason is divine, and that therefore knowledge and faith must be capable of harmonious adjustment. This adjustment, he

[1] For his trial and recantation, Wilkins, iii. 397.

[2] *Ch. West.*, ii. 278 ff. See also Banks, *op. cit.* ii. 55–62.

held, would be found in the life and faith of the Roman Church.

The theology of Thomas marks the hour of Rome's greatest triumph. After overcoming all other powers, she annexed the human reason itself. With the death of Thomas we begin a new era in the history of thought. Henceforth in every moment there lurks, or seems to lurk, the struggle of reason and faith. The triumph of Thomas had been the triumph of a moderate Realism. Nominalism seemed silenced, but in the next generation it recovered its strength. But more important than the victory of a philosophical creed was the powerful dissolvent to all faith, or rather to the Thomist conceptions of faith which the leaders in this reaction introduced into the schools. We first see this far-reaching scepticism in the teaching of the great opponent of Thomas, the famous Scotus.

John Duns Scotus is one of the mysteries of literary history. Of his life almost nothing is known save the memory of his greatness and the records of his gigantic industry, the twelve vast folios which, like the tombstones in our cemeteries, witness to a vanished reputation. Three countries contend for the honour of his birth. The claims of Dun or Down in the North of Ireland may be dismissed as a patriotic figment, while Dunstane

in Northumberland, a Merton legend,[1] must give place to Duns in Berwick. When or where he joined the Franciscans is as uncertain as the place and date of his birth.

In 1300 we find him at Oxford. In a list of friars presented to the Bishop of Lincoln for ordination he appears as Johannes Douns. The Bishop, we note, refused to grant him a licence to hear confessions. In 1304 he "incepted" and taught theology at Paris. There he probably remained until 1307. In a list of the Minorites who died at Cologne we read: 'D. P. Frater Johannes Scotus, S.T.P. Doctor Subtilis nominatus, quondam lector Coloniae, qui obiit anno 1308, vi. Id. Nov.' There he was buried in the Franciscan Church. Later generations expanded these few facts into romances that they labelled memoirs. To these Bernardin of Siena added the crowning embellishment that he was buried alive in a trance. If the story be true that he died at the age of thirty-four—there is absolutely no evidence for or against, save general incredulity—the mere rapidity of his productiveness is the most marvellous feat of its kind in the intellectual history of our race. But all is obscure—"thick

[1] Rashdall, ii. 531 n. 2, for the origin of this claim. That Duns should have been a Merton man, though often asserted (*e.g.* Brodrick), was impossible by the Statutes (Brodrick, 317–40).

and impenetrable," as Milman puts it, "as his own writings, from whence some derive his Greek name Scotos."

The fates have dealt almost as hardly with the writings of this marvellous Scot as with those of Wyclif himself. His interminable length and spider-like logic concentrated upon him the wrath of the New Learning. Tyndall and others used his name as the synonym for a stupid, a meaning which still cleaves to it. Colet could not speak of him with patience, and caused Erasmus, who had been nurtured on his subtleties in Paris, to abhor him also.[1] In 1535 Layton wrote to Thomas Cromwell: 'We have set Dunce in Bocardo, and banished him Oxford for ever. He is now made a common servant to every man, fast nailed up upon posts in all houses of common easement.' 'The next time,' he continues, 'that we came to New College we found all the great Quadrant Court full of the leaves of Dunce, the wind blowing them into every corner.'[2] But the New Learning had neither sympathy nor understanding of the fallen Schoolman. With the cry of *Vae victis!* it overwhelmed them all with contempt.

[1] Seebohm, *Oxford Reformers*, 102-12.
[2] Wood, *Annals*, ii. 62.

Of the greatness of the influence of Duns and the acuteness of his intellect there can be no doubt. The drift of his teaching is also clear. In twelve volumes, this remarkable Scot destroyed by his criticism of Thomas the rational grounds of faith. Belief is for him a mere matter of obedience to the unconditioned will of God, or rather of subjection to the authority of the Church. Though himself an ardent champion of the Roman creed, even in its extremer forms—Duns defended as a Franciscan the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, which Thomas the Dominican had refused to recognise—his criticism of the validity of the arguments put forward in defence of faith prepared the way for the coming rupture of the alliance between Philosophy and Theology. His appeal to the sacred and inviolable authority of the Roman Church—he would not believe, he said, even the Gospels save on the witness of the Church—was a mere personal conviction. His destructive criticism bore fruit after he had passed away. In some minds it led to scepticism; in others to what Dr. Rashdall calls "the emotional prostration before authority, popularly called faith."

The influence of Scotus on Wyclif was twofold. The Reformer inherited his dissolvent spirit without sharing his blind obedience. He

accepted also the belief of Duns in the omnipotence of the arbitrary will of God. With Wyclif this idea takes the place of Augustine's doctrine of original sin. Arbitrary as this last may appear to us to-day, it is certainly less arbitrary than the basing all things on the caprice of omnipotent will. Though both Wyclif and Duns profess to believe in the freedom of the will, both so fetter us with arbitrariness that we cease to be free. In the fact that Duns with all his orthodoxy, and Wyclif with all his evangelical zeal, both glide towards a philosophical Pantheism we may detect also the common danger of all schools of Realism.[1]

In the Middle Ages the sons of St. Francis were the fruitful parents of new philosophies, heresies, orthodoxies, rebellions, and democracies, —in all things a contrast to the conservatism and moderation of the Dominicans. The reaction against the Realism of the Franciscan Scotus was led by another English Franciscan, William of Ockham, '*doctor invincibilis.*' Ockham, whose work in alliance with Marsiglio we have

[1] For the Pantheistic tendencies of Wyclif, see Lechler, 252–4. Especially note—'Sed bene sequitur quod quilibet creatura secundum esse intelligible sit Deus' = 'Every creature in respect of his *esse intelligibile* is God.' *De Dom. Div.*, 43—Duns has always been a favourite of the Jesuits; his philosophy suits them (Allen: *Continuity Christian Thought*, 235).

already noticed, was the second founder of Nominalism. Realism, he argued, in whatever form it may be expressed, was bound to lead to absurdities; the universal, he maintained, exists only in the thinking mind. This modern doctrine of Conceptualism was followed up, as it is often followed up to-day, by the relegation of all knowledge which transcends mere experience to the sphere of faith. The Thomist doctrine of the unity of reason and faith gave place to a growing consciousness of their discrepancy. This in due time would lead to the throwing over by the reformers of the system of the schools, and the appeal to a reflecting or unreflecting experience.

The Nominalism of Ockham, "the perfection of common sense," swept all before it. In 1339 his books were proscribed by the University of Paris, and his doctrines condemned; in the next age the great chancellor of the university, John Gerson, the leader of the Conciliar movement, became their open adherent. By the time of the Council of Constance, Nominalism was in the ascendant both in France and Germany. The effect of this we shall see later, when Hus was condemned almost as much for being a Realist in philosophy as for being a heretic in theology. At Oxford also, as Wyclif dis-

covered during his controversy over Transubstantiation, the Nominalists were formidable and aggressive. The modern man, who looks upon all philosophy as the harmless and useless occupation or leisure of a few dreamers out of touch with a world of facts, can form little conception of the fury with which the rival schools attacked each other. In Prague, the *odium philosophicum* even descended into the streets. In the confused faction fights that raged there before the great migration of five thousand Germans in 1409 to Leipzig, it would be difficult to say which hatred was uppermost, that of Czech against Teuton; of heretic against orthodox, or of Realist against Nominalist.

The work of Wyclif, viewed merely as a schoolman, was twofold. His Realism was a protest both against the popular Nominalism of Ockham and the extravagances of the Scotists. To the earnest nature of Wyclif, Nominalism was an impossible creed. For, in spite of all the objections that may rightly be urged against the logical positions of the thirteen different schools of Realism which Prantl has discriminated, this much may be said at anyrate about the more moderate Realists, to whom Wyclif belonged—that their Realism was a protest against any doctrine of illusion. They held

that mental ideas are, in some sense of the word—in the explanation of this lay their difficulty—strict realities. Realism was their protest against the question, so dear to a diseased subjectivism—

> Is all that we see or seem,
> But a dream within a dream?

Thus their Realism was, as Carlyle would have phrased it, the affirmation of the Everlasting Yes; the affirmation of a doctrine of assurance. The medieval thinker characteristically sought this assurance in reason and the objective world; religious minds to-day sometimes seek it in their subjective experiences. Both have grasped the half only of the complete truth.

Wyclif's Realism lay at the root of all his views of the Church. It led him to warn his hearers, time after time, against the Nominalist heresy that there was no Church until the death of Christ; to contrast with the Predestinate the foreknown who form one body, of which the devil is the head, and of which 'the outward form is God's eternal foreknowledge.'[1] Above all, as we shall see, his Realism brought him into collision with the prevailing Nominalist heresies concerning the Sacrament. For the Nominalist, who held that the universal name was but a mere

[1] *De Eccl.*, 77, 102, 437 *et passim.*

'*flatus vocis*,' found it easy to believe in the annihilation of the substance of the elements. To Wyclif the Realist such an idea was an absurdity; his whole philosophical system fell to the ground with its mere possibility. So, in the interpretation of his ideas, we must ever remember that when Wyclif speaks of the host as a 'sign,' he does not use the word in any Zwinglian sense. With him every figure is a reality, with its own real though ideal existence, while every real is also of necessity universal.

Wyclif's place at Oxford was more than that of a leader in the revival of a moderate Realism. 'His disciples,' we are told, 'called him by the famous and distinguished name of John, son of Augustine.' In this they did right; for Wyclif owed the better part of his teaching to Augustine, whose exegesis and thoughts he repeatedly quotes.[1] The general effects of Scholasticism, as Rashdall rightly observes, had been "to throw into the shade the more Pauline side of Augustine." The first step in a return to a more spiritual Christianity was taken therefore when Bradwardine began, and Wyclif continued, this return to Augustine, or rather to certain elements in Augustine. The completion of this return was reserved for the reformers of the sixteenth

[1] Cf. *Trialogus*, 462–3, for list in one work only.

century. Whether the Church of the twentieth century will continue to be satisfied with Augustine is a question the discussion of which lies outside our immediate purpose.

Bradwardine has been neglected by all but Lechler. Neander and Ueberweg do not even mention him. But his influence in the Church, his place in historical theology, as well as in the development, of Wyclif's ideas, must not be overlooked. Thomas of Bradwardine was born towards the close of the thirteenth century at Chichester, to which city the family had moved some years before from the village in Herefordshire to which they owed their name. At Chichester the lad may have learned to know Richard of Bury, who at that time held a prebend in its cathedral. At a later day, when Bury became Bishop of Durham and a noted patron of books and learning, he secured for Bradwardine his first preferments. At Oxford Bradwardine entered the newly founded college of Walter de Merton. There he studied theology and philosophy, and wrote scientific treatises on the *Quadrature of the Circle, Speculative Geometry,* and the like. In 1325 we find him one of the proctors of the university, at the time of the great lawsuit over rights of discipline between the chancellor and its absentee archdeacon,

Cardinal de Mota of Avignon.[1] The chancellor won; Oxford was henceforth delivered from all further control by the Bishop of Lincoln.

About this time an incident occurred, best described in Bradwardine's own words—

'I was at one time,' he tells us, 'while still a student of philosophy, a vain fool, far from the true knowledge of God, and held captive in opposing error. From time to time I heard theologians treating of the questions of grace and freewill, and the party of Pelagius'—the reference is to the Scotists, who leaned towards Pelagianism—'seemed to me to have the best of the argument. For I rarely heard anything said of grace in the lectures of the philosophers, except in an ambiguous sense. But every day I heard them teach that we are the masters of our own free acts, and that it stands in our own power to do either good or evil, to be either virtuous or vicious, and such like. And when I heard now and then in church a passage read from the apostle, which exalted grace and humbled freewill,—such, for instance, as that word in Romans, ix., v. 16, "Therefore it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy,"—I had no liking for such teaching, for towards grace I was still unthankful (*ingrato mihi gratia displicebat*). I believed also with the Manichæans that the apostle, being a man, might possibly err from the path of truth in any point of doctrine. But afterwards, and before I had become a student of theology, the truth before mentioned struck upon me like a beam of grace. It seemed to me as if I beheld in the distance, under a transparent image of truth, the grace of God as it is prevenient both in time and nature to all good works,—that is to say, the gracious will of God, which precedently wills that he who merits salvation shall be saved, and precedently works this

[1] *Collectanea*, i. 16–25.

merit of it in him,—God, in truth, being in all movements the primary Mover. Wherefore I give thanks to Him who free gave me this grace' (*Qui mihi hanc gratiam gratis dedit*).[1]

After his conversion, if so we may call this change, Bradwardine delivered at Merton a course of lectures on theology, in which he systematised his views on the all-determining power of grace. In 1337 the Bishop of Durham procured his appointment as chancellor of St. Paul's, while in 1339 he became the chaplain and confessor of Edward III. The memories of his piety and gentle influence lingered long both at Court and in the army, which he accompanied to the French campaigns. Bradwardine was twice elected by the monks of Canterbury to be their archbishop. On the first occasion their haste and informality angered the King, but on a second vacancy, a few months later, Edward himself nominated his friend. In July 1349, Bradwardine was consecrated at Avignon. The year was the year of the Black Death. In the great palace of Clement VI. fires were kept burning night and day, and few were admitted to the Pope's presence. But fears of the plague did not prevent Cardinal Hugh of Tudela, a kinsman of Clement, from indulging in a studied insult to England. In the banquet which followed the

[1] *De Causa Dei*, lib. i. c. xxxv. 380, quoted by Lechler, 66.

consecration, he led into the Pope's presence an ass, on which rode a clown with a petition round his neck, that he too might have a bishopric.

Bradwardine returned to England to assume his duties. On the 19th of August he landed at Dover. A week later he lay dead at Lambeth at the house of the Bishop of Rochester, the second archbishop within a few months to fall a victim to the Black Death. We can only measure the loss which the English Church sustained in his decease by the love and esteem in which people and King alike held him. His whole character is summed up in the beautiful prayer with which he begins the fifteenth chapter of his great work:

'Good Master, my only Master, Thou who from my youth upwards hast taught me until this day all that I have ever learned of the truth, and all that, as Thy pen, I have ever written of it, send down upon me also now of Thy great goodness, Thy light, so that Thou, who hast led me into the profoundest depths, mayest also lead me up to the mountain heights of this inaccessible truth. Thou, who hast brought me into this great and wide sea, bring me also into the haven. Thou who hast conducted me into this wide and pathless desert, Thou my Guide, my way, my end, lead me also unto the end. Show to Thy little child how to solve the knot of Thy Word.'

The influence of Bradwardine was far reaching. We see this in the confession which Chaucer puts into the mouth of his nun's priest as regards

the distinction between predestination and free will:

> I ne can boult it to the bren (*bran*)
> As can the holy doctor, Saint Austyn
> Or Boëce, or the Bishop Bradwardyn.

In the sixteenth century his works were neglected; the doctrines they contained were expounded with more clearness and system by the greater master, who has for ever, to the misfortune of historical theology, stamped his name upon a creed, all the germs of which are to be found in Augustine. But in 1618 George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, published Bradwardine's Latin lectures, previously known as the *Summa Doctoris Profundi*, under the title (in Latin), *On the Cause of God against Pelagius, and on the Nature of Causes.*[1] A copy may have fallen into the hands of Milton, and have led to the familiar passage in *Paradise Lost* in which he speaks of the fallen angels as the first professors of "vain wisdom and false philosophy."

> Others apart sat on a hill retired,
> In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
> Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
> Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end in wandering mazes lost.
>
> *Par. Lost*, ii. 555–565.

[1] A huge work of over 1000 folio pages, with useful life by Savile.

Be this as it may, of Bradwardine's influence on Wyclif there can be no doubt. By his work at Oxford, the memories of which would linger into Wyclif's generation, the Reformer would be confirmed in that rigid predestinarianism which he had first learned from Augustine. In his earlier writings, as Dr. Rashdall points out, Wyclif appears "to assert human freedom in something more than the equivocal sense in which it is admitted by Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. He was evidently trying to steer a middle course between the indeterminism of Fitzralph and the thoroughgoing predestinarianism of Bradwardine."[1] But in his later years the deterministic tendency grew upon him.

Before we pass away from the connection of Wyclif with Oxford, it may be well to point out more fully what is involved in calling Wyclif the last of the Schoolmen. To put it briefly, with Wyclif Scholasticism became played out. This great movement had, in earlier years—the age of Anselm and Abailard—brought deliverance to the human mind, the opening of the eyes of the blind, and the reconciliation of

[1] Cf. Poole, *De Dom. Div.*, xxix., and for Wyclif's views on free-will, etc., at large (unfinished), *De Dom. Div.*, 115–172. He takes refuge in "the Aristotelian distinction between that which is absolutely necessary and that which is necessary on a given supposition."

reason and faith. Her energies were now exhausted, her vital force spent. If in common repute Scholasticism, unjustly, stands damned for ever, the cause must be found in the worse than uselessness of her latter days. History has too often forgotten her splendid services in the abiding memory of her servile follies and parrot repetitions. As an intellectual movement, her work finished with Ockham. Even Wyclif, judged as a Schoolman, does little more than gyrate on a well-beaten path. His philosophical works, as modern research has shown, contain little that can claim to be strictly original.

The labours of the later Schoolmen are mere mental gymnastics without bearing on life; researches which issue in no discovery; the worship of logic for logic's own sake; elaboration of distinctions without difference; endless conflicts in which the contending foes lose sight of each other in a more than Egyptian darkness and labyrinths without issue. Scholasticism, in fact, with the work of Ockham became unreal. We see this unreality in the favourite idea of the later Schoolmen that there is a double truth, one philosophical and another theological. In 1376[1] the students of Paris drew up a list of

[1] See the account of the affair given by the "Reformer before the Reformation," John of Goch (Ullman, i. 37).

two hundred and nineteen propositions, each of which might be true in philosophy though false in theology. In these theses we find denials of the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the dead, besides assertions of the eternity of matter, the uselessness of prayer, and the existence of fables in the Gospels. They held that it was open to debate whether continence was a virtue, or voluntary fornication a sin. There was, in fact, nothing which the later Schoolmen were not prepared to fling into their logical machine, as they mistook an endless output of syllogism and wind for reality and truth. Wyclif himself was real; his bitterest foes could not label him otherwise, not even when he is dancing, as we sometimes see him, on the point of a syllogistic needle. Unfortunately he was no prophet. He did not see that the soil was exhausted, and that neither his labours nor genius could produce from it any further harvest of life.[1]

[1] I have said nothing concerning Wyclif's relation to Grosseteste. (Authorities: Stevenson, *Robert Grosseteste*, 1899, the best life. Luard, *Letters*, Rolls.) Lechler, in a preliminary essay, identifies him as a "precursor" of Wyclif. In this he seems to me to go too far. That Wyclif was profoundly indebted to Grosseteste goes without saying. The same is true of every English theologian of the time. That Grosseteste's

love of the Bible and appeal to Scripture strengthened the appeal of Wyclif is also true. Wyclif could often plead (*S.E.W.*, *passim*) the precepts of 'the great clerk.' That Grosseteste's resistance to Innocent (*supra*, p. 38) planted seeds of revolt is also true. But here the likeness ceases. If I understand Grosseteste aright, his reformation would have been an administrative reformation only. He had no quarrel with Rome (Maitland, *Canon Law*, 66, 116) or with her doctrine. In one respect Wyclif failed to follow the lead Grosseteste had given. He did not attempt, like Grosseteste, to substitute for Scholasticism the revival of Greek studies. I note in passing that the pronunciation of *Grosseteste* would seem to be settled by its rhyming with *honèst* in Gower, *Conf.*, 179.

CHAPTER IV

WYCLIF: POLITICIAN AND REFORMER

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a poure Persoun of a toun;
But rich he was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Criste's gospel trewly wolde preche;
His parischens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversité ful pacient;
And such he was i-proved ofte sithes
Ful loth were him to curse for his tythes,
But rather wolde he geven out of dowte,
Unto his poure parischens aboute,
Of his offrynge, and eek of his substaunce.

CHAUCER, *Prol.*, 475–528.

(A) *Sources:* The *Latin Works of Wyclif*, edited by the WYCLIF SOCIETY, and especially the English Works, edited by ARNOLD, *Select English Works*, 1869 (=*S.E.W.*), and MATTHEW (E.E.T.S.=Matt.). To these add the *Trialogus*, ed. LECHLER, 1869. Also *De Officio Pastorali*, ed. LECHLER, 1863.

The contemporary Chronicles, etc.:—*Fasciculi Zizaniorum* (ed. SHIRLEY, 1858=*F.Z.*), an indispensable work; *Chronicon Angliæ* (a most important work unknown to Lechler), *Walsingham*, *Knighton*, and the important *Eulog. Continuatio* (all the above in the Rolls' Series); WILKINS, *Concilia* iii.; RYMER, *Foedera* [ed. 1729] (viii., ix.), and *Rot. Parl.* (iii., iv.).

(B) *Modern Authors:* There is no satisfactory life of Wyclif. The early lives of BALE (†), FOXE, JAMES, 1608 (†) and FULLER, are chiefly copied from *F.Z.* LEWIS, *Life and Sufferings of John Wiclif* (1720), the earliest modern work, is still in some respects the best. VAUGHAN—*Life and Opinions*, 1828 (†), and *John de Wyclif: A Monograph*, 1853—now adds little, though of great importance in the history of our knowledge of Wyclif. References to the *Monograph* only. LECHLER'S great pioneer work needs rewriting, with new references to the printed editions. (References to Lorimer's translation, 1884). TREVELYAN'S *England in the Age of Wycliffe* (1899) is a brilliant and useful study, especially of the social and political environment, *e.g.* the Peasant's Revolt. Of popular biographies, POOLE'S *Wyclif and Movements for Reform* and SERGEANT'S *John Wyclif* may be mentioned, and RASHDALL'S able summary in the *D. Nat. Biog.*, of especial value for chronology. For the political aspects of Wyclif, see also STUBBS, iii. 353 ff. (followed by CREIGHTON, who is somewhat slight). MILMAN is too full of errors to be safely used; Neander (after Vaughan) and the Germans are not sufficiently aware of Wyclif's importance. For other sources and authorities, see notes and Appendices, especially App. J.

WYCLIF: POLITICIAN AND REFORMER

I

WE know little of the circumstances which led the great schoolman to throw himself into the struggle of politics. But Wyclif probably could not save himself. Church and State were too completely intertwined in medieval life for the innovator in the one not to find himself the revolutionist in the other. On all sides there was a strange confusion of religious and political interests. For the questions of the day were chiefly ecclesiastical—at anyrate before the Peasants' Revolt—and the parties of the State ranged themselves for the attack or defence of the Church. Even the war with France, in which the whole nation persisted with an infatuation blind to all disaster, had an ecclesiastical side. The people realised that the head of the Church was a 'French Pope,' that aliens 'worse than Jews or Saracens, who neither see nor care to see their parishioners, convey away the treasure of the realm.' Parliament dis-

covered in 1376 that the gold annually paid to the Pope amounted to five times the sum paid to the King,[1] while the insufficiency of the revenue led all to insist that the Church, which held a third part of the land of England, should bear a third part of the new taxation.[2] In spite of protests, King and Parliament secured their way. The Church, in fact, was too unpopular to resist. The wiser ecclesiastics took to heart the fable that, according to Wyclif, was told them by a certain peer in the Parliament of 1371:

'Once upon a time there was a meeting of many birds; among them was an owl. But the owl had lost her feathers, and made as though she suffered much from the frost. So she begged the other birds, with a trembling voice, to give her some of their feathers. They sympathised with her, and every bird gave the owl a feather till she was overladen with strange feathers in no very lovely fashion. Scarcely was this done when a hawk came in sight in quest of prey. Then the birds, to escape from the attacks of the hawk, demanded their feathers back again from the owl, and on her refusal each of them took back his own feather by force, and so escaped the danger, while the owl remained more miserably unfledged than before. Even so, we must wisely defend the country with property which is our own, and exists among us in superfluity.'[3]

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[1] *Rot. Parl.*, ii. 337; cf. Matt., 82.

[2] Stubbs, iii. 365, asserts that "the proportion of direct taxation borne by the clergy" did amount "to nearly a third of the whole direct taxation of the nation." See Stubbs, ii. 580; Trevelyan, 364, for a full discussion.

[3] *De Dom. Civ.*, ii. c. i. This tale was a favourite with the spiritual Franciscans, and seems to have been a prophecy of

Even more important than the war in the confusion of politics and reform was the attitude of a party in the State led by the ablest and most unscrupulous Englishman of the age, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The duke was at the head of a small but well organised band of nobles and knaves whose one object was their own aggrandisement. For statesmanship except as an instrument of selfishness they cared nothing. They allowed the national defences to rot while they made their "corners" in wool and victuals; they encouraged Edward III. in the intrigue of his old age with Alice Perrers, that they might better keep the power in their own hands. When the fleets of France and Spain drove the commerce of England from off the seas and harried our coasts, they would do nothing for the salvation of their country without their price. By their lawless insolence they prepared the way for the deluge of the next century, when the Wars of the Roses crushed out the old nobility, upturned the ancient social system, and laid liberty at the feet of a triumphant crown.

their missionary, Jean de la Rochetaillade, who in 1349 wrote in prison at Avignon his wild *Vade mecum in Tribulatione*, on the vices of the clergy and the need for disendowing the Church (Brown: *Fascic.*, ii. 496–507; Lea, iii. 86–8). Whether Wyclif had read it or not I cannot say.

With this faction of ignoble schemers Wyclif first allied himself in his efforts for reform. We may deplore the fact, but in all ages politics make strange bedfellows. There were, in fact, two features in the teaching of the Reformer, the value of which as weapons of party John of Gaunt was not slow to perceive. Wyclif had demandedth at the employment of the clergy in secular business should cease; 'neither prelates, priests, nor deacons should have secular offices,—that is, Chancery, Treasury, Privy Seal, and other such offices in the Exchequer.'[1] The duke had determined that he would oust the bishops from their places as the chief officers of the Crown, and fill them with creatures of his own. Wyclif called on the 'King and witty lords' to take back by 'process of time' the endowments of a Church which 'habitually abused them,' that 'the land might be stronger' and the pressure of taxation lessened.[2] Above all, as Wyclif insisted with wearisome reiteration,

[1] Purvey, *Remonstrance*, 2, 154. *De Blas*, 261.

[2] See *S.E.W.*, iii. 216, 217, 241, 391. *De Eccl.*, 377. For other passages of Wyclif on disendowment, see Matt., 230, 274, 279, 297, 389, 412, 451, 471, 475. *S.E.W.*, iii. 275, 479. *De Blas*, 56, 189–9, 198–9, 216, 268, 271. *Trial*, iv. c. xix. *Dial*, c. ii. 3–4. *Polem. Wks.*, i. 28, 192, 244–7. *Lat. Serms.*, ii. 49, 52, 435. Wyclif was not alone. Cf. *P. Plow. C.*, xviii. 227: 'Take their lands, ye lords, and let them live by dimes.'

by the restoration of the Church to its original poverty, when the priests should live on 'dimes and offerings' there would be a return to the primitive spirituality. The duke made this scheme of disendowment—'not robbery but righteous restitution'—peculiarly his own, untrammelled by Wyclif's social aims or spiritual desires, but with far clearer insight into the only possible consequences. He saw his chance of doubling the estates of the House of Lancaster and of gaining over a greedy baronage by the prospect of spoil. So for a few years John of Gaunt and his clique made use of the Reformer and his pen, while Wyclif, too high souled to see the selfish aims of his allies, used their protection to push his doctrines.

But Wyclif's first appearance in politics was rather as the representative of a nation than as the associate of a faction. In July 1374 he was sent to Bruges to treat with Gregory XI. concerning the non-observance of the Statute of Provisors.[1] The mission was fruitless; the court did not intend that it should be otherwise. By a curious irony, the chief outcome was the appointment of the Bishop of Bangor and Wyclif himself to certain benefices by means of the very "provisons" they had been instructed to

[1] Stubbs, ii. 447 n. Rymer, iii. 1037.

denounce, though whether Wyclif accepted his "provision" is uncertain. But the lessons that Wyclif learned at Bruges, and his association there with the head of the commission, John of Gaunt, were not without their influence on the development of his thought. In Nov. 1375 the Reformer began that controversy with the papal power which only ceased with life itself. The circumstances were as follows: In 1374 Gregory XI. renewed the claim of 1365 for the payment of the tribute first imposed by the shame of John, and for the arrears of the same since 1333. 'The curia,' he wrote, 'had not hitherto made its demands, from regard to the necessity of England, which had been involved in grievous wars, but now that peace is restored, England is rich and can satisfy her obligations.'

The victors of Poictiers were not the men to renew the national disgrace. They replied, as they had replied in 1365,[1] that John had acted beyond his rights. So firm was their tone that the papal claim has never since been renewed. The chief result of this insolent demand was to force Wyclif, who had hitherto published nothing save works of scholastic philosophy, into controversy with an anonymous doctor of theology who had bitterly attacked him. In a tract entitled

[1] *Rot. Parl.*, ii. 290.

Determinatio Quaedam de Dominio,[1] Wyclif, who calls himself 'a Government commissioner,'[2]—the reference is to Bruges—puts into the mouth of seven lords 'in a certain council' the arguments which he would urge against the papal claim. The seven lords are all understudies of Wyclif, but the sixth specially represents the author's own views of 'lordship.'

'We must oppose,' he argues, 'the first beginnings of this mischief. Christ Himself is the Lord paramount, and the Pope is a fallible man who must lose his lordship in the event of his falling into mortal sin. . . . We hold our kingdom as of old, immediately from Christ in fief.'

Within two years this tract was expanded by Wyclif into his important treatises, *On the Lordship of God* and *On Civil Lordship*[3]—the latter alone filling more than a thousand pages in the only manuscript known to exist. But the dreary length is not the only hindrance to our understanding of Wyclif's theory of politics. His arguments are obscured by being expressed in the definitions and distinctions of a decaying feudalism. Like most schoolmen, Wyclif starts from an ideal

[1] Printed in Lewis, 349–356, from an imperfect MS.

[2] See App. K.

[3] For these treatises the student will probably content himself with Dr. Poole's analysis, *Med. Thought*, 290-306. *De Dom. Div.*, xxiv.–xxxiv. Their theological bearings in Lechler, 244, 251, 259–64, 283–4, etc. For their indebtedness to Fitzralph, *supra*, p. 131; Woodford, in Brown *Fascic*, i. 205, 207, 237.

state of society; 'all authority is founded in grace.' 'Lordship' rests with God alone, who as the Suzerain of the world, hath allotted dominion to popes and kings in fief and tenure of their obedience to Himself. Of this feudal tenure 'from the Lord in chief,' mortal sin is a breach, and in itself 'incurs forfeiture.' Herein the reader will note a danger upon which Gregory XI. in 1377 was not slow to fasten, for Wyclif's doctrine of breach by mortal sin would have led to anarchical consequences if Wyclif had applied his conclusions to existing society. But he saved himself by a curious metaphysical juggle. He carefully distinguishes between dominion and power: dominion, which belongs alone to the righteous man, and power, which the wicked may have by God's permission, in consequence of the Fall, but to which the Christian must submit as Christ submitted to be tempted by Satan. Thus 'God ought to obey the devil,'[1] to quote the paradoxical and unhappy conclusion by which Wyclif saves his teaching from anarchy at the expense of reverence. In

[1] "This first appears in the later history of Wyclif errors, 1382; but it is perfectly in keeping with his earlier doctrine." Poole, *Med. Thought*, 301. Cf. *F.Z.*, 278, 494. *S.E.W.*, iii. 437. *Chron. Ang.*, 342. We may add that Wyclif's disciples did not understand the phrase. 'God owes the devil the obedience of love,' said Hereford and Repyngdon. *F.Z.*, 328. In Bohemia it was condemned as 'erroneous' only. Palacky, *Doc.*, 452.

thus building up society upon the Fall, Wyclif followed the usual medieval theories. Thomas Aquinas alone had discerned that social instincts are an essential part of man's constitution.

Another dangerous tenet of Wyclif was his defence of socialism. 'Charity,' he maintains—and with Wyclif charity is the correlative of grace—'seeketh not her own,' but rather seeketh to have all things in common. Wyclif's communism, in fact, was a logical deduction from his main thesis that 'every righteous man is lord over the whole sensible world'; 'the faithful man'—Wyclif is quoting from the Proverbs—'hath the whole world of riches, but the unfaithful man hath not even a farthing.'[1] But in weighing Wyclif's socialism we must not forget that in his scheme lordship is always linked with service; the two are corresponding terms, as the most exalted of all potentates acknowledges by his title of *Servus servorum.* Nor was Wyclif blind to the fact that his ideal society is incapable of realisation in this present life. He is careful to insist that the righteous must in nowise attempt to acquire their

[1] Quoted by Wyclif from Prov. xvii. 6, where it is found in the Septuagint. Wyclif learned it from Augustine. Poole, *Med. Thought*, 293, shows also how much Wyclif owed to Augustine's aphorism, 'Sin is nothing, and men when they sin become nothing.' See Lechler, 265–6. See especially, *Trialogus*, 67, 71, 74, 205; also *De Dom. Div.*, 120. See *infra*, p. 214.

inalienable rights by force. Wyclif had yet to learn that a smouldering fire and a powder magazine, however carefully guarded, are dangerous neighbours.

Wyclif's doctrine was not less revolutionary in religion than in the State; for the theory exalted the spiritual independence of the righteous man. For the righteous man, as the possessor of 'a dominion founded on grace,' held his fief direct from God; 'God gives not any lordship to any of His servants except He first gave Himself to them.' The reader must not be misled by the feudal phraseology into undervaluing the consequences of such teaching. For Wyclif every man had an equal place in the eyes of God; priests and laymen become one, each 'hold' of God, and on the same terms of service. Thus Wyclif left no place for the mediating priesthood and the sacrificial masses of the medieval Church. The personal relation between a man and God is everything; character the one basis of office. Luther's doctrine of justification by faith and Wyclif's teaching of 'dominion founded in grace' both lead, though by different ways, to the same result; both break down the medieval barriers between the individual and God. But Wyclif's symbols and ideas suffer, as Holmes would express it, from

their being "polarised." Isolated from their scholastic environment, they leave all their magnetism behind them. Luther, on the contrary, "shelled out" his ideas "from the old symbols" into "new, clean, unmagnetic words," which have, alas! since his day become polarised themselves.

Before the publication of his matured speculations 'concerning dominion' Wyclif had already been drawn into the strife of parties. In 1371 the Lancastrians had made an attack upon the most illustrious of the 'Cæsarean' clergy, Wykeham, the Bishop of Winchester. They had succeeded in driving him from office. Emboldened by success, they now put him on his trial for peculation, and 'hunted the said bishop from place to place.' To strengthen their cause they invited Wyclif to come up to London and preach in the city churches the doctrines of disendowment he had begun to profess in the schools.[1] Wyclif gladly embraced the opportunity of forming in the capital a band of supporters. Convocation, which had already, through the popular hatred of Lancaster, succeeded in restoring Wykeham to his see, determined to return blow for blow. Courtenay, Bishop of London, forced Archbishop Sudbury to summon

[1] Devon, *Issues*, 200, shows that Wyclif was summoned to London, Sept. 22, 1376.

Wyclif to appear in the Lady Chapel of St. Paul's, there to answer for his heresies concerning the wealth of the Church. On Feb. 19, 1377, Wyclif appeared in defence of his doctrines. He was attended by four friars from Oxford, each representing one of the four orders.[1] Evidently the Reformer had not yet broken with the Mendicants.[2] There was, in fact, much to attract him in their theories of poverty, and at Oxford he would see the most earnest side of their life. But the help of the friars was needless; no trial took place. For the duke had taken his stand at the prisoner's side, and threatened that he would 'pull down the pride of all the bishops in England.' Hot words were passing when the London apprentices broke into the church and put an end to the trial. John of Gaunt, who had incurred the hatred of the citizens by his attempt in the same week to pass a Bill for depriving London of its municipal government, narrowly escaped with his life; while Wyclif was carried off by his supporters.[3]

[1] See note, p. 178, also p. 217.

[2] The break came when Wyclif began his attack on the Papacy (*infra*, p. 173), about 1378. (Lechler dates 1381, but see Matt., xliii.–xliv., also *Chron. Ang.*, 116, bottom. For earlier date, see Buddensieg, *Polem. Works*, i. p. xvi.)

[3] The scene and after riots are well told by Trevelyan, *op. cit.* 43–48, from the *Chron. Ang.*, 113–125.

Baffled in his first attempt to crush the Reformer, Courtenay, if we may accept the testimony of Foxe (iii. 4), had recourse to Rome. On May 22, 1377, in the great basilica of St. Maria Maggiore, Gregory XI. issued a series of bulls in which he directed the University and others to arrest John Wyclif, and 'keep the said John in prison, under safe custody, until you receive further commands from us.'[1] Owing to the death of Edward III. (June 21, 1377), and the need for redirecting them to the new King, the bulls were not published in England until the 18th of December. The student should note that the grounds of accusation were still political rather than theological. We see this in the list of nineteen propositions extracted from Wyclif's writings[2] which Gregory condemned as heretical.

The papal ban, though as yet unpublished, drove Wyclif into bolder defiance. For some months Wyclif was the leader, not merely of the Lancastrian faction, but of the nation itself. We find him consulted by the young King, Richard II., and his Parliament (Oct. 1377) as to 'whether the realm might not legitimately stop the export of

[1] The five bulls are in *Chron. Ang.*, 174 ff. Translation of one in Gee and Hardy, 105–8.

[2] Poole, *Med. Thought*, 284, note 2, against Lechler, 166. The nineteen propositions are in Wilkins, iii. 123; *F.Z.*, 253.

gold to Rome, considering the necessities of her defence.' Wyclif emphatically answered Yes. 'The Pope,' he argued, 'cannot demand treasure except by way of alms and by the rule of charity. But all charity begins at home'; for our fathers endowed not the Church at large but the Church of England. 'Rome-runners,' as he afterwards protested, 'bear the King's gold out of our land, and bring again dead lead and heresy, and simony and God's curse.'[1] He closed his State paper, as we may fairly call it, with his favourite proposition, 'that the goods of the Church be prudently distributed to the glory of God, putting aside the avarice of prelates and princes.' 'At this point,' we read, 'silence was imposed upon him by the king and the council'; nor has Wyclif given us further light upon the real difficulty and folly of all his schemes of disendowment—how 'to put aside the avarice' of a spendthrift and debauchee like Richard II.[2]

In a further pamphlet,[3] which he subsequently explained away in a series of scholastic paradoxes,[4] Wyclif attacked the papal right of

[1] Matt., 23. For the State paper see *F.Z.*, 258–71.

[2] For details of Richard's extravagance, see Wylie, ii. 115.

[3] *F.Z.*, 481.

[4] *Chron. Ang.*, 184–90, on p. 187 of which he lays down that an unjust excommunication must be treated with respect.

excommunication. 'No man,' he asserted, 'could be excommunicated to his hurt' 'unless he were first and principally excommunicated by himself.' Bold as the defiance was, bishops and Pope found that they were powerless. Wyclif was secure in the support of a Parliament that bitterly resented the papal extortions, and of a people upon whom the abuses of the Church weighed heavily. When summoned a second time before the bishops at Lambeth (Feb. 1378), the widow of the Black Prince despatched Sir Lewis Clifford haughtily bidding them to desist, while the mob broke in to his rescue. The bishops, wailed Walsingham, 'shaken as reeds by the wind,' dismissed Wyclif, who had put in a short 'defence' of his doctrines,[1] with the injunction to abstain from further publishing his opinions 'on account of the scandal of the laity.' At Oxford the Reformer was supported by a powerful party in the schools, while even his enemies hesitated lest by imprisoning an English subject 'at the command of the Pope they should seem to give the Pope dominion and royal power in England.' So the Chancellor replied to the demands of the bishops that, in the opinions of the masters of theology, Wyclif's condemned propositions 'were true, though they sounded

[1] Given by Wals., i. 357–63.

badly to the ear.' The death of Gregory XI. (March 27, 1378) and the Great Schism put an end to further papal proceedings. The Urbanists and Clementines were too busy damning each other to interfere with English heretics.

II

Wyclif was still busy advocating his Erastian doctrines of a Church strictly subordinate to the State, in which the bishops should be the servants and nominees of the Crown, and the Pope himself 'subject to kings,'[1] when the great insurrection of the peasants in 1381 put an end to his hopes of accomplishing reforms by aid of political means. The causes of this rising and the means whereby it was stamped out do not here concern us, but its effects on the fortunes of Wyclif were immediate and disastrous. Wyclif's political alliance was ended, John of Gaunt's influence was gone, his policy of disendowment dead. Under the pressure of the common danger the seculars and regulars ceased their quarrels. The bishops, 'who once hated the false friars like

[1] *S.E.W.*, ii. 296, iii. 435; cf. *De Officio Regis* (1379), the whole argument of which is to make the King the supreme head of the Church; and in which "Wyclif supplies a foundation on which subsequent reformers could fairly claim that their own buildings were erected." (Pollard, Pref., *in loc.*, xxvii.)

devils,' patched up a truce; 'Herod and Pilate,' as Wyclif bitterly complains, 'have become friends.'[1] The Church aided the State in its task of hanging and disembowelling some thousands of peasants, while Archbishop Courtenay, who had succeeded the murdered Sudbury, found that he could now rely on the assistance of the Government in crushing the heresiarch. Wyclif was no longer the popular champion of national rights, for his enemies had charged him with being 'a sower of strife, who by his serpent-like instigations has set the serf against his lord,' and published against him the dying confessions of John Ball and Jack Strawe.

These confessions, though either false or extorted by the rack, were part of a charge difficult to meet. Historians are now agreed that the great blaze of 1381 was not due in any appreciable degree to Wyclif's influence, and would assuredly have happened if the Reformer had never lived. John Ball, the noblest[2] of

[1] *F.Z.*, 284; *S.E.W.*, iii. 416; cf. *Polem. Poems*, i. 259 (or *Mon. Franc.*, i. 598)—

> With an O and an I, sit Deus beatus,
> Hic amici facti sunt, Herodes et Pilatus.
> Sed magno miraculo Wyclif coruscavit,
> Cum fratres et monachos simul collocavit.

[2] See his letter, *Chron. Ang.*, 322; Wals., ii. 33-34.

agitators, had begun his work when Wyclif was still a lad at college; the great Society or Union of Peasants was not officered by University dons. The friars, as Langland and others[1] tell us, had for years been preaching to the people 'that all things under heaven should be in common' long before Wyclif had published a line. The connection between the two movements, as even the monk of St. Albans admits,[2] was rather one of coincidence. In that age revolutions were naturally religious, while all reformation was of necessity a social revolution. A wave of democratic agitation was sweeping over Europe; there were popular insurrections that year in Ghent, Paris, Rouen, and Florence. A fierce struggle was working its way to the surface between reason and authority in the sphere of politics as well as belief. Nevertheless, to some extent Courtenay was right: Wyclif's communistic ideas, reported second hand by poor priests, or distorted[3] by men indifferent to their subtle and unworkable distinctions, had not been without their influence. The Peasants' Revolt, though far from being a communistic movement, was but the rude translation into a

[1] *Chron. Ang.*, 312; *P. Plow. B.*, xx. 273–275.
[2] *Chron. Ang.*, 311; cf. Knighton, 151.
[3] Cf. instances, *Chron. Ang.*, 282, 340.

world of practice of a theory of 'dominion' that destroyed the 'lordship' of the wicked, and exalted communism into the inalienable right of the saint. 'The right to govern,' Wyclif had argued, 'depends upon good government; there is no moral constraint to pay tax or tithe to bad rulers either in the Church or the State.' The down-trodden serfs, ignoring Wyclif's pleas for caution, applied his doctrines to the corrupt government of Richard II. and the oppressive poll tax of his selfish Parliaments. Despite the storm that burst upon him, the Reformer refused to throw over the peasants in their hour of need. Fearless of all consequences, Wyclif dared in the hour of their defeat to avow his sympathy with the peasants' demand for freedom, his anger at their oppression, and to put in his plea for a policy of mercy.[1]

But in his prosecution of Wyclif, Courtenay was careful to proceed on other than political grounds. During the two years of comparative retirement at Lutterworth that preceded the outbreak of the rebellion, Wyclif had taken

[1] The reader should contrast the noble sympathy of Wyclif (Matt., 233-234; *De Blas.*, 188-203) with the ravings of Luther on a like occasion. But Luther's *Against the Murderous and Plundering Peasants* must be corrected by his *Epistle on the Harsh Pamphlet against the Peasants.*

the great step of his life. He had passed from an orthodox politician eager for the reform of the existing international Roman Church, into a Protestant. Hitherto Wyclif had not disputed the spiritual primacy of the Papacy, though ready enough to lead the crusade against papal pretensions, and even to speak ill of individual popes. He had not scrupled, for instance, to call Gregory XI. 'a horrible fiend.' Wyclif's position hitherto would seem to have been this: we must obey the Pope as the vicar of Christ, only the vicar of Christ must be the holiest, the most God-enlightened man in Christendom. But, as we see in his *De Dominio*, this obedience to the Papacy was rather a matter of convenience and church order than principle. Wyclif had already questioned whether one day 'the ship of Peter may not exist exclusively of laymen,' and whether, when that day comes, 'Christ will not be *per se* sufficient for the rule of His own spouse.'

The great Schism and the folly of Urban, whose election he had welcomed—'an evangelical man from whose works it behoves us to believe that he is the head of the Church'—drove Wyclif from these contradictory positions. His spiritual earnestness was shocked, his theory destroyed, by

the spectacle of two popes, each claiming to be the sole head of the Church, each labelling the other as Antichrist, 'like dogs quarrelling for a bone,' 'like crows resting on their carrion,' each seeking to bring about a general Armageddon for the destruction of his rival. For Wyclif the year of the Schism (1378) was the crucial year of his life. He first urged that both popes should be set aside as 'having little in common with the Church of the Holy God.' From this position of neutrality he quickly passes into one of antagonism to the Papacy itself. He pours scorn on the idea that because Peter died at Rome therefore every Roman bishop is to be set above all Christendom. By the same reasoning the Moslem might conclude that 'their prelate at Jerusalem,' where Christ died, is greater than the Pope. Christ alone is the head of the Church, the primacy of Peter not proven, the infallibility of his successors a heresy—'Lord! where each pope be more and better with God than was Peter, who erred oft and sinned much,'—their canonisations no proof that a saint is in heaven, their claim to 'assoil and curse' without warrant, and their dispensing the Church's treasury of grace 'the lewdest heresy.' 'In a word,' as Wyclif daringly proclaims, 'the papal institution

is full of poison,'—'Antichrist[1] itself'—'the man of sin' who 'exalteth himself above God.' The Pope is 'a limb of Lucifer,' 'the head vicar of the fiend,' 'a simple idiot who might be a damned devil in hell,' 'a more horrible idol than a painted log,' to whom it were 'detestable and blasphemous idolatry' to pay veneration. 'Christ is truth,' the 'Pope is the principle of falsehood'; Christ lived in poverty, the Pope labours for worldly magnificence; 'Christ refused temporal dominion, the Pope seeks it'; Christ obeyed the temporal power, the Pope strives to weaken it; 'Christ chose as His apostles twelve simple men,' the 'Pope chooses as cardinals many more than twelve, crafty, ambitious and worldly'; Christ despised gold, with the Pope everything is marketable; Christ sent His disciples out into the world, Antichrist lives 'in a superb castle, built with the money of the poor,' and gives 'his disciples' comfortable dwellings in the 'patrimony of the Crucified.' In one of his later treatises he even welcomes

[1] For what Wyclif the realist meant by 'Antichrist,' see Dziewicki, *De Apostasia*, Introd. xxvi. For Wyclif's bitterest attack on the Papacy, see his *De Christo et suo adv. Antichrist* (1383), cc. xi.-xv. (In *Polem. Works*, vol. ii. See also Index, "Papa," *ibid.* 792–5.) Compare also App. L (on the Church). For a defence of his language, see Buddensieg, *Polem. Works*, i. p. xxi.

the Schism which had at an earlier date disgusted him: 'Christ,' he exclaims, 'hath begun already to help us graciously, in that he hath cloven the head of Antichrist, and made the two parts fight against each other!' The violence of Wyclif's language did his cause injury; to some extent it was an echo of the violence wherewith the rival popes cursed each other.

Wyclif's break with the Papacy was part of a new idea that he had formed of the Church. The politician had become a Presbyterian reformer for whom the whole ecclesiastical position was at fault, and who desired to leave the parish priest as little fettered by ecclesiastical superiors or rival orders as he is in Scotland or Switzerland to-day. In our attempt to understand Wyclif's doctrine of the Church we are confronted with the same difficulties as in the study of his earlier political speculations concerning 'dominion.' The Reformer revels in scholastic and impossible abstractions, riddles of the schools on the squaring of a circle (God) whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere, and the like. We best get at his meaning by studying his views in their least elaborate forms. There we find that Wyclif begins by accepting the ancient division of the Church into three parts—'one triumphant in heaven,' 'one militant here on earth,' and the

third 'asleep in purgatory.' These are the 'queens, concubines, and virgins' of Solomon—that is, Christ. The Church militant he defines as the whole number of the elect, containing 'only men that shall be saved.' So absolute is his predestinarianism that he adds that no man, not even a pope, 'wots whether he be of the Church, or whether he be a limb of the fiend,' nor will he allow that 'the Church can ever be called the whole body (*universitas*) of faithful travellers.' Nevertheless he guards his doctrine from some of its dangers by adding that 'as each man shall hope that he shall be safe in bliss, so he should suppose that he be a limb of holy Church,' and even maintains that 'each man that shall be damned shall be damned by his own guilt, and each man that is saved shall be saved by his own merit.' Wyclif was not slow in drawing the logical conclusion of his predestinarianism. The Church, as the mystical body of the predestinated, is a unity that knows nothing of papal primacies and hierarchies, and of the 'sects' of monks, friars, and priests; nor can the salvation of the elect be conditioned by masses, indulgences,[1] penance, or other devices of sacerdotalism.

[1] Wyclif on indulgencies is very interesting. *De Eccl.*, c. xxiii. He falls back on his argument of preordination, which makes the

In pamphlet after pamphlet, now in English, now in Latin, whose number witness to his energy, whose diversity to his genius, Wyclif pushed his doctrines to their conclusions. From cardinals—'CARior DIaboli NAtus, LIcium Seminator'—the hinge (*cardo*) of the broad way that leadeth to destruction, down to hedge priest, Wyclif attacks the whole hierarchy. 'There were,' he said, 'six superfluous orders among the clergy,' the 'twelve daughters of the horse-leech Satan ever crying Give! give!' namely, popes, cardinals, bishops, archdeacons, officials, deans, rectors, priests, monks, friars, doorkeepers, and questors. 'In the Bible no sanction can be found for the Pope and his Cæsarean clergy'—the cardinals. Prelates, the third class of 'tormentors of the Church,' were unknown in early days and needless in later times. 'By ordinance of Christ, priests and bishops were all one.' Thus prelates were really the first 'sect' to fall away from the unity of the Church. A millstone should therefore be hung round their necks, for they 'do not stay with Christ on the mountain,

Pope's distribution of merits superfluous (568). His final conclusion is 'that God alone grants indulgences, and only to those whom He has first made worthy' (583). God, in fact, 'has predestinated an appropriate punishment for every sin, with which He Himself cannot dispense' (586). For Purvey's views, see his *Remonstrance*, 57, 58. Cf. *S.E.W.*, iii. 259; i. 189.

but with the people on the plain.' 'Crown (tonsure) and cloth make no priest, nor the Emperor's bishop with his words, but power that Christ giveth.' Monks with their 'fat cheeks and great bellies,' who 'do not the office of curates, neither in teaching nor preaching nor giving of sacraments, but set an idiot for vicar,' are but squanderers of national wealth better bestowed on the poor. Another 'sect' are Austin canons, with their lies and deceits, their sinful endowments and their saints, while the friars, 'the order of Caim,'[1] are the most covetous and superstitious of all, the most difficult to lead back to the simplicity of Christ. 'They despoil the people by hypocrisies and leasings, and with the spoils they build Caim's castles; they steal poor men's children, which is worse than stealing an ox, and are glad to steal heirs (I say nothing of their stealing of women), and thus they make the land barren by withdrawing workmen.' His final condemnation is that 'they love their order more than Christ,' and so 'move nations to battles and men to law-suits.'[2]

[1] Wyclif always spelt Cain as Caym, *i.e.* Carmelites, Augustinians, Jacobites (=Dominicans), and Minorites (=Franciscans). For "Caim," cf. *Polem. Poems*, i. 266.

[2] For sources, see App. L.

III

From this attack on the hierarchy and the 'six superfluous orders,' the keen logic of Wyclif was driven into an attack upon the central position of the medieval Church. In the summer of 1380[1] the Reformer published at Oxford twelve theses against the current idea of Transubstantiation. At first, as Dziewicki has shown, Wyclif's conclusions were practically the same as those of St. Thomas Aquinas. His objection was to the Nominalists who held that the bread was annihilated, a doctrine which seemed 'the abomination of desolation' to so thorough-going a realist as the Reformer.

The dogma of Transubstantiation plays so great a part in the story of the Reformation that it is necessary above all things that the student should understand exactly what it means. The history of the dogma does not here concern us, but the precise question at issue in this supreme mystery and miracle of faith is all important for the understanding not only of Wyclif, but of Luther and Zwingle. According to this theory, whereby the schoolmen tried to explain the long accepted fact of the Real

[1] For the date, see Matthew, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, 1890, p. 328, against the usual, 1381 (*F.Z.*, 104).

Presence, the bread and the wine at the touch of that more glorious Substance which takes possession of them, pass out of existence and are lost, leaving behind nothing but shadowy appearances of themselves which serve to indicate the presence of something else instead. But this explanation, though at first it seems to have satisfied the medieval Church, was soon discovered to be in itself a mystery requiring explanation; for how can appearances possibly exist without anything that appears—how can the *noumenon* alone be changed while all the phenomena remain? The subtle intellect of St. Thomas answered the question by his conception of 'quantity'—or, as we should now term it *subsistence* as distinct from *substance*—"which remains in the Eucharist as the subject of form, colour, movement, taste, and all other phenomena observed in the visible and tangible host. The reader will of course ask: Can 'quantity' exist without anything that has quantity? but the very question indicates that he has not sufficiently understood the hypothesis. Quantity is not a mere abstraction, not a mere mode of being; it is quite different from extension, for it is that which makes extension, and may be defined as a force that extends material substance. . . . Thus, after the words of consecration, the sub-

stance of bread is no longer there, but quantity takes its place and upholds the other accidents naturally."[1] When asked what becomes of the bread after consecration, St. Thomas is in a difficulty; he admits that the bread is nowhere, but denies that it is annihilated, since it is changed into Christ's body.

The theory of Aquinas is hard to understand, and is not, we believe, even in the Roman Church, an article *de fide*. There are, in fact, three other explanations of the dogma, all of which are allowed, and between which a cautious infallibility to this day takes care not to decide.[2] With one only of these would Wyclif be familiar, the theory of John Duns Scotus, the great rival of Thomas. Scotus takes refuge in his

[1] Dziewicki, *De Apostasia*, Introd. Wyclif tells us that the favourite idea in the province of Canterbury was that what remained was weight; in the diocese of Lincoln (including Oxford) 'quantity'; in Wales and Ireland, quality (*De Euch.*, 184–6.)

[2] The three other theories are—

(*a*) The theory of absolute accidents; the theory of Scotus.

(*b*) The theory of Descartes. Descartes will have nothing to do with the Scholastic theory of quantity. He supposes that when the bread-substance is taken away (whether by annihilation or otherwise) the *surface* is conserved (with all the movements that would have been imparted to it had the bread remained) through the supernatural presence of Christ below the surface.

(*c*) The theory of purely subjective accidents.

treatment of Transubstantiation, as he had done in his doctrine of Creation, the Incarnation, and the Sacrament, in the omnipotence of God's arbitrary will. Reason and faith are with him almost antagonistic principles. The doctrines which his acute criticism and far-reaching scepticism destroyed must be accepted on the authority of the Church, or on the basis of a moral will above proof or reason. He held, therefore, that though the substance of the elements is absolutely annihilated, the accidents of the bread and wine yet remain, maintained as verities by the unconditioned will of God.

Wyclif's first attack on Transubstantiation was rather an attack upon the prevailing Scotist interpretation, and upon the Nominalists, who had set the cautious Thomist doctrine aside and instituted their arbitrary annihilations and recreations. For Wyclif was a Realist who held even that space and time had objective reality, to whom the annihilation of anything real was absolutely inconceivable.[1] He seems, therefore, at first to have fallen back upon the Thomist idea of quantity, or, as Wyclif preferred to call it, 'a mathematical body,' without clearly understanding what that position was. For we read

[1] See App. M, last paragraph.

in a fair contemporary account of the changes through which Wyclif passed before 1380 the following:—

'While the said Master John was a sententiary[1] at Oxford, and even a responding bachelor,[2] he held publicly and in the schools that though the sacramental accidents were in a subject, yet that the bread ceased to exist at consecration. And being much questioned as to what was the subject of those accidents, for a considerable time he replied that it was a mathematical body.[3] Afterwards, when this position had been much argued against, he answered that he did not know what the subject of the accidents was, yet he asserted clearly that they had a subject. Now in these articles and this confession he lays down expressly that the bread remains after consecration and is the subject of the accidents.' (Woodford in *F.Z.*, xv. note 4.)

But Wyclif's moral nature was too earnest to rest content with these dialectic refinements. Even in his earliest treatises on the subject we find him again and again breaking into his dry scholastic arguments to emphasise that the 'whole fitness to receive the host lies in sincere and grateful love of Christ and God.' "The truth is," says Mr. Matthew, summing up the drift of his Latin arguments, "that Wyclif would like to avoid saying how Christ's body is present . . . If his opponents would let him, he would be

[1] A student who could lecture on the *Sentences*, after which he might take his B.D.

[2] A B.D. of two years' standing.

[3] I take this to be the same as Aquinas' 'quantity.' See *De Logica*, iii. 137.

content to say that Christ was present sacramentally. *In signo* (not *ut in signo*), in his writings, means that though his presence is figurative, it is not simply a figure, but has special efficacy. What that is precisely he cannot tell, and loses himself in trying to express it. He is sure that current explanations are carnal and wrong, but does not know how to replace them. . . . He would have liked Queen Elizabeth's quatrain—

> Christ was the Word that spake it,
> He took the bread and brake it;
> And what the word doth make it,
> That I believe and take it."

But his Nominalist opponents would allow Wyclif no rest. They drove him from position to position, until finally he put forth a theory practically identical with that taken at a later date by Luther. In other words, Wyclif believed in Consubstantiation. 'That Christ lies hidden in the elements' he regarded as beyond question, but this miracle of faith did not depend on the words of a priest. The sacramental words 'make the occasion only' of Christ's sacramental presence. 'The truth and faith of the Church is that as Christ is at once God and man, so the Sacrament is at once the body of Christ and bread—bread and wine naturally, the body and

blood sacramentally.' 'The consecrated host is neither Christ nor any part of Him, but the effectual sign of Him,' 'the sign and garment,' as he puts it elsewhere, 'of His body.' He will have nothing to do either with 'the heretics that trow and tell that this sacrament is God's body and no bread,' or with 'the heretics that trow and tell that this sacrament may in no wise be God's body' for 'it is both together,' 'God's body in the form of bread.' The former position, the Scotist doctrine of the annihilation of the substance of the elements, he held to be 'the abomination of desolation,' a departure from early tradition, and especially from the teaching of Augustine, 'not known before Lanfranc,' by which 'Antichrist subverts grammar, logic, and natural science.' 'I believe,' he continues, 'that of all the heresies by which the Church has ever been infected, none deceives the people in such various ways; it rots them, renders them idolaters, denies the doctrine of Scripture, and, through this infidelity, moves Christ himself to wrath.' Wyclif's arguments are as full of hair-splitting distinctions and figments as the theories which he sought to demolish, puzzles about 'maggots bred in the host,' 'whether the real body of Christ in the sacrament is standing or sitting,' and the like, while his inconsistencies

show the shifts to which he was driven. Nevertheless, the drift of his thinking is clear. 'His chief intention,' he said, 'was to call back the Church from idolatry,' for 'the end of the Sacrament is the presence of Christ in the soul.' He would rescue the Eucharist from its prevailing materialism, and deliver the Christian from his bondage to the priest; while at the same time he quotes approvingly the words of John Damascenus: 'We must believe that the bread becomes the body of Christ, since the Truth has said it, not inquiring further.'[1]

IV

Wyclif's denial of Transubstantiation, as yet, however, scarcely more than academic, gave Courtenay his opportunity. By his boldness Wyclif had cut himself off from all but a small minority of supporters; even those who had hitherto sympathised with him now withdrew

[1] *De Apostasia*, 53. For sources, see Appendix M.

Creighton (i. 124 n.) refers for an instance of the material conceptions of Transubstantiation to No. 99 of *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*. A bishop cannot get fish for dinner on Friday, so he eats a partridge, and says to his servant: 'You know that by my words, I and all other priests can make from a wafer of wheat and water the precious body of Christ; cannot I then change this partridge into fish, though retaining the form of a partridge?'

their help. At Oxford, where for years his influence had been all powerful, Berton, the chancellor, and a council of twelve doctors condemned his doctrines and forbade his lecturing. Wyclif appealed to the King (1381) — this appeal in a purely theological matter to the authority of the State is characteristic,[1]—but John of Gaunt hurried down to the University and urged him to be silent. But, instead of silence, 'the heresiarch of execrable memory' laid a long memorial before Parliament, May 1382,[2] in which he reaffirmed doctrines 'which would make the ears of a faithful hearer tingle.' With a boldness indifferent to consequences Wyclif urged that members of religious orders might be allowed freely to leave them, the tithes should be diverted to the maintenance of the poor, the clergy supported by voluntary contributions, prelates be declared incapable of secular office, the statutes of Provisors and Premunire be enforced

[1] Wilkins, iii. 171.

[2] *S.E.W.*, iii. 507, for date and *Complaint* usually dated in the November after the Earthquake Council. I take Walsingham's *Petition* (ii. 51) and *De Blas.*, 270, as the same, and have combined the two. The Oxford matter is interestingly told, *F.Z.*, 272–333; cf. Wilkins, iii. 176, etc. For date of Earthquake Council, Lechler, 380 (note by Lorimer). Its conclusions are in *F.Z.*, 277–282, translated by Gee and Hardy, 108; cf. Wilkins, iii. 158–165.

against the Pope, and that 'Christ's teaching' concerning the Eucharist 'may be taught openly in churches to Christian people.' Courtenay answered by summoning, May 21, 1382, 'at the house of the Blackfriars in London,' a Council—the Earthquake Council as it was afterwards called, from the earthquake which disturbed its proceedings,—which condemned ten of Wyclif's doctrines as heretical, and fourteen as errors.

Armed with this condemnation the Archbishop proceeded to strike a blow at the University which had hitherto been the head centre of free thinking. There the Wycliffite preachers, Nicholas Hereford, Philip Repyngdon, and John Aston, were exhorting the authorities to exclude all friars and monks openly asserting the truth of the Master's doctrines. Town and gown were allied in their favour; the preachers were escorted from the church to their homes by 'twenty men with weapons under their gowns.' Dr. Rugge, the new chancellor, whose sympathies, if not with the Lollards, were at anyrate against the regulars, as also were those of the majority of the 'regents in arts,' was summoned to Lambeth, and warned by the bishops and Privy Council that the heretics must be silenced. When Dr. Rugge replied that he dare not, for his life,

publish the condemnation of Wyclif in Oxford; 'Then is Oxford,' retorted Courtenay, 'the fautor of heresies, since she will not allow orthodox truth to be published.' The chancellor was forced to seek pardon on his knees, and only obtained forgiveness on the intercession of the aged William of Wykeham.

This attack on its liberties set Oxford on fire. The seculars armed in defence of their rights, and threatened death to the friars, 'crying that they wished to destroy the University.' But within five months, by the help of the Crown—Richard had an old grudge to pay off against the undergraduates—Courtenay and the regulars had won. A Convocation 'for the suppression of heresy' made a triumphant entry into the conquered city. A royal writ ordained a monthly inquisition for the followers and books of Wyclif through the colleges and halls of Oxford; the heretics, unable to bear their terrible isolation, either recanted or were silenced. Oxford was won back to orthodoxy; the revolt of the seculars against the regulars crushed. But with the destruction of religious freedom and the triumph of the friars, the great University ceased to be 'the second school of the Church.' Paris once more gained its lost pre-eminence, while Cambridge, hitherto insignificant, "came into

fashion with cautious parents."[1] The first of the Reformers was not only the last of the schoolmen, but the last outcome of the intellectual vigour of the great medieval University. "The century which followed the triumph of Courtenay is the most barren in its annals, nor was the sleep of the University broken till the advent of the New Learning restored to it some of the life and liberty which the Primate had so roughly trodden out" (Green). Even then, at the Reformation it was Cambridge which led the way.

Before his defeat, at the University Wyclif had appealed for support to the people at large. He turned from the schools of Oxford, sermons at St. Mary's,[2] and the politicians of Westminster, to the weavers of Norwich and Leicester. The last of the schoolmen was transformed into the first of modern pamphleteers, as in tract after tract, written in the tongue of the people, Wyclif drove home the arguments hitherto buried in scholastic Latin.[3] The daring of his logic took shelter in no half-way house of compromise. In terse, homely English, in stinging sarcasm and

[1] Rashdall, *Univs.*, ii. 553. See p. 242 *infra*.

[2] *Lat. Serm.*, iv. 48; cf. *F.Z.*, 305.

[3] Wyclif's Latin is bad, not like that of Aquinas or Anselm. It shows that men had ceased to think in Latin. See Poole's remarks, *De Civ. Dom.*, i., xviii.–xix.

bold invective, Wyclif challenged the whole round of medieval faith and practice. Pardons, indulgences, absolutions, pilgrimages, the worship of images, the adoration of the saints, the treasury of their merits laid up at the reserve of the Pope, fasting communion,—it was more important 'to fast from sin,'—the distinction between venial and mortal sins, 'the blessing of wax and bread, of palms, of candles, of salt, of stoves and pouches,' the privilege of sanctuary, were all successively denied. Purgatory[1] and Extreme Unction he retained, though he owned that for the institution of the latter he looked in vain in the Bible. Images, if they increased devotion, need not be removed; and prayers to saints were not necessarily wrong. Confession he held to be useful, provided it was voluntary and made to a suitable person, best of all if it were made in public. Compulsory confession 'was the bondage of Antichrist.'[2] The whole spirit of his revolt is seen in his incautious declaration that preaching 'is of more value than the administration of any sacrament.'[3]

[1] *S.E.W.*, i. 101, 333; ii. 100; iii. 339. *Lat. Serm.*, iv. 21. *De Blas.*, 119.

[2] Matt., 333, 328–9, 340–1. *S.E.W.*, iii. 255. *De Blas.*, cc. ix., x., xi.; *Lat. Serm.*, iii. 67; iv. 56–7.

[3] Matt., 57. *S.E.W.*, iii. 202. *Op. Evang.*, i. 375. *Lat Serm.*, i. 110.

Not content with these attacks upon the outworks of the older dogmatism, Wyclif threatened the very citadel by his appeal to the Bible as the primary authority, following in this the teaching of Grosseteste. 'Neither the testimony of Augustine nor Jerome, nor any other saint should be accepted except in so far as it was based upon Scripture.' 'Christ's law,' he held, 'is best and enough, and other laws men should not take, but as branches of God's law.' He went even further by his assertion of the right of every man to examine the Bible for himself:

'The New Testament is of full authority, and open to the understanding of simple men, as to the points that be most needful to salvation. . . . He that keepeth meekness and charity hath the true understanding and perfection of all Holy Writ,' for 'Christ did not write His laws on tables, or on skins of animals, but in the hearts of men.' 'The Holy Ghost,' he adds, 'teaches us the meaning of Scripture as Christ opened its sense to His Apostles.'

The Reformer will have nothing to do with the device of 'Antichrist's tyrants' that Scripture must always be interpreted mystically. He maintains that the 'literal sense' is the best, 'dulcissimus, sapientissimus, et preciossimus.' Thus he closed what Lechler calls the "back doors" of tradition, though the modern reader who dips into his sermons will probably hold

that his theory was more consistent than his practice. Even Wyclif could not emancipate himself from the constant allegorisation of the age.[1] Wyclif's insistence on the supreme authority of Scripture[2] was not less than that of Luther, and won for him at an early date in his scholastic career the proud title of 'Doctor Evangelicus.'[3] Those who mingled God's truth with human traditions he dubbed 'mixtim theologi,' 'the medley divines.'

Wyclif's appeal to the Scriptures was followed up by the most abiding work of his life—the translation of the whole Bible from the Vulgate into the language of the people. Hitherto the Bible, though fairly well known by the clergy and more spiritual laity, as the sermons and books of devotion that have come down to us show, was of necessity a sealed book to the masses. For the Anglo-Saxon versions, some manuscripts of which date as late as the twelfth century, had in the last two hundred years

[1] For a good specimen, see *Lat. Serms.*, i. 372 (the feeding of the five thousand). Compare *S.E.W.*, i. 30, with App. O (*d*).

[2] See App. N.

[3] See for his spirit the Preface to his early work, *De Logica*, 'Motus sum per quosdam legis Dei amicos certum tractatum ad declarandam logicam sacrae scripturae compilare.' In the *Trialogus* alone Wyclif makes 700 quotations from the Bible. See Index of the same in the *Trialogus*.

become unintelligible, while the French Scriptures would be understood only by the cultured. Partial translations into English, no doubt, had been made before his day, especially of the Psalms,[1] but to Wyclif and his assistants belong the credit of first setting forth the whole Scriptures in the vulgar tongue. Prominent among his helpers must be reckoned Nicholas of Hereford, who seems to have translated the Old Testament up to the Baruch iii. 20, when his work was interrupted by his citation before the Synod of Blackfriars (1382).[2] Wyclif, who had previously translated the Gospels—the translation of St. Matthew at anyrate is his,—continued Nicholas' task, while other scholars assisted with the Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse, and Clement of Llanthony's *Harmony of the Gospels.*

A competent Roman scholar, Dr. Gasquet, has recently doubted Wyclif's authorship of the translation attributed to him.[3] We find it

[1] For a list of such translations, see Thomson's *Wycliffe Exhibition in the King's Library*, 1–17, *F. and M.*, i., i.–v. For that of Richard Rolle of Hampole (d. 1349), see *ibid.* For that of William of Arundel, see *Mon. Franc.*, i. 204.

[2] See *F. and M.*, i., xvii., l., for facsimile of the interrupted page from the original in the Bodleian.

[3] Gasquet, *Old English Bible* (1897). Answered by Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient MSS.*, pp. 204–8. Matthew, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, 1895, and above all in the searching *Ch. Quart. Rev.*, Jan. 1901. Cf. also the Preface to *F. and M.'s* great edition.

advisable, therefore, to add the positive proofs. We may grant, as Dr. Gasquet claims, that Wyclif never alludes to his own translation, nor does he seem, in his quotations from the Bible, to make use of it, even in his later English sermons. But his works are full of passages advocating such a translation.[1] Moreover, the translation is definitely attributed to Wyclif by his contemporaries, as well as by the uninterrupted tradition of history. The complaint of the angry Knighton[2] is well known, but will bear repetition.

'This Master John Wyclif translated from Latin into English—the Angle not the angel speech—the Scriptures, which Christ gave to the clergy and doctors of the Church that they might minister to the laity and to weaker persons according to the state of the times and the wants of men, in proportion to the hunger of their souls. Thence by his means it is become vulgar and more open to laymen and women who can read than it is wont to be to clerks well lettered. Thus the pearl of the gospel is scattered abroad and trodden underfoot by swine, the jewel of clerics is turned to the sport of the laity.'

To the same effect is the testimony of Arundel.

[1] I have noted the following:—*S.E.W.*, i. 129, 209; ii. 221; iii. 90, 98, 99, 100, 114, 184, 202, 234 l. 24. Matt., 429, 430. *Polem. Works*, i. 126, 168, 711. See also Trevelyan, 131 note 2.

[2] Knighton, ii. 152–155. The reader should note that in histories published before 1895 the references to Knighton are to the columns of Twysden's *Decem Scriptores*, 1652.

In a letter which he wrote in 1412 to John XXIII., to accompany a list of 267 errors in Wyclif's works, the Archbishop speaks of the Reformer as 'filling up the measure of his malice by devising the expedient of a new translation of Scripture into the mother tongue.'[1] We scarcely need the further evidence of Hus.[2] 'For the English say that Wyclif translated the whole Bible from Latin into English'; or the official accusation against Ralph Mungyn in 1416 'that he dispersed in the City of London the gospels of John Wyclif.'[3]

Wyclif's translation also was the first of the whole Scriptures, or of any considerable portion of the Scriptures, done into modern as distinct from early English. Dr. Gasquet has denied this, following the lead of certain Anglican historians.[4] The existence of such a translation rests merely upon indirect evidence of a very doubtful character. As the matter is of considerable importance, we will present the evidence in full and weigh its value. The first witness

[1] Wilkins, iii. 350.

[2] *Works*, ed. 1558, i., cviii. b.

[3] Foxe, iii. 539. Mungyn was examined by Lyndwood and sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. This shows how Lyndwood acted on his own interpretation. See *infra*. Wilkins, iii. 497–503.

[4] Dixon, *Hist. Ch. Eng.*, i. 451; Hook, iii. 83.

is Lyndwood, who states in a gloss on the constitutions of Oxford (*infra*, p. 242), that the prohibition does not apply to versions of Holy Scripture 'previously translated.' Lyndwood gives no further details, and the whole gloss reads like a lawyer's ingenious deductions.[1] The second witness is Sir Thomas More. In his famous *Dialogue* More discusses the question whether or not the Bible may be read in English. He maintains that 'the Holy Bible was long before his' ('the great arch-heretic Wyclif's') 'day by virtuous and well learned men translated into the English tongue.' 'Wyclif,' he adds,

'purposely corrupted the holy text, maliciously placing therein such words as might in the reader's ear serve for the proof of such heresies as he went about for to sow, which he not only set forth with his own translation of the Bible, but also with certain prologues and glosses which he had made thereon.'

In the following chapter More once more repeats his statement. He is dealing with the charge that the Romanists have burned the English Bible. He replies—

'If this were so, then were it in my mind not well done. But I believe ye mistake it. How be it, what ye have seen I cannot say. But myself have seen and could show you Bibles fair and old written in English which have been known and seen by the bishop of the diocese, and left in laymen's hands (women's, too, such as be known for good and catholic folk), who used it with

[1] See App. O (*b*).

devotion and soberness. But, of truth, all such as are found in the hands of heretics they use to take away. But they do cause none to be burned, so far as ever I could wit, but only such as be found faulty. Whereof many be set forth with evil prologues or glosses maliciously made by Wyclif and other heretics. For no good man, I ween, would be so mad as to burn up the Bible wherein they found no fault, nor any law that letted' (hindered) 'it be looked on and read.'[1]

Foxe also tells us that 'before John Wyclif was born, the whole body of the Scriptures was by sundry men translated into our mother tongue.' Ussher repeats the same statement with more circumstance in his *Preface to the Authorised Version* of 1611: 'And about that time, even in our own King Richard the Second's day, John Trevisa translated them into English, and many English Bibles in written hand are yet to be seen with diverse; translated, as is very probable, in that age.'

These statements of Ussher, Foxe, and More can scarcely be accepted as sufficient proof of the existence of this lost version. Ussher is undoubtedly referring to Wyclif and Purvey, of whose translation, if we may judge from the context, he seems to have been ignorant. Dr. Gasquet would be the first to tell us that Foxe is of doubtful value unless he is quoting from official sources. The evidence of More is

[1] More, *Dialogue* (ed. 1530), bk. iii. cc. xiv. and xv.

of greater importance, and at first sight would seem to be conclusive. But further investigation will convince the student that More did not know Purvey's Bible as such when he saw it. He pours out his scorn upon what he calls the versions of the heretics, in complete ignorance of the fact that his friend Bishop Bonner possessed a copy of Purvey's version, that the nuns of the convent of Sion had another copy, while other copies belonged to Henry VI., of holy fame, to St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, the Chantry of St. Nicholas, Holy Trinity, York, and other churches and orthodox men.[1] These 'Bibles fair and old' to which More refers were probably, therefore, Purvey's version, which More mistook—as in fact did all writers until recent years—for a version even earlier than Wyclif's, or for the original version itself.[2]

The first translation was in several respects unsatisfactory. "Wyclif's style is free and colloquial. There can be little doubt that he had in his mind the common people. Hereford on the other hand was a pedant, hence his style is stiff and awkward."[3] According to Prof.

[1] *F. and M.*, i., xxxii. note: also xxi., lvii.

[2] The argument will not be altered if we assumed, which seems to me more doubtful, that More considered "Purvey" the original Wyclif version.

[3] Kenyon, *Our Bible*, 201.

Skeats he used also a Midland dialect. Accordingly at a later date, probably about 1388, the original version was revised and improved by Purvey, who had been Wyclif's fellow worker from the first, and in later life his curate at Lutterworth. The two versions can now be studied side by side in the great Oxford edition of Forshall and Madden, and the reader see at a glance the nature of the changes. Purvey—for the proofs that he was the author of this second version are complete [1]—smoothed out the harsh literalness of the original, and substituted for its frequent glosses short comments in the margin, especially from Nicholas de Lyra, whom Wyclif had called 'a modern, thoughtful, and literal interpreter.' How difficult was the task of thus making the first complete English Bible is sometimes overlooked by readers acquainted from their earliest days with versions and revisions. The mere translation from the Vulgate —the Greek was out of the question [2]—was the least part of the task. The whole language of theology was yet to form and draw Wyclif into his unauthorised glosses. The difficulties are,

[1] See *F. and M.*, i., xxv.-xxviii. For a reference by Purvey to Wyclif's version, see his General Prologue, 'The English Bible late translated' (*F. and M.*, i. 58).

[2] For Wyclif's ignorance of Greek, see Lechler, 90.

however, clearly set forth by Purvey in his "General Prologue" to the later version, in a familiar passage—

'A simple creature hath translated the Bible out of Latin into English. First, this simple creature had much travail, with divers fellows and helpers, to gather many old Bibles and other doctors and common glosses, and to make one Latin Bible partly true; and then to study it anew, the text with the gloss and other doctors as he might get, and especially Lyra on the Old Testament, that helped full much in this work; the third time, to counsel with old grammarians and old divines of hard words and hard sentences, how they might best be understood and translated; the fourth time, to translate as clearly as he could to the sense, and to have many good fellows and cunning at the translating' (*F. and M.*, i. 57).

The influence of Wyclif's or rather Purvey's version was far-reaching. "The new version was eagerly sought after and read. Copies passed into the hands of all classes of the people. Even the sovereign himself and princes of the royal blood did not disdain to possess them."[1] The multiplication of copies must also have been rapid. Of the one hundred and seventy existing manuscripts, only thirty of which are copies of Wyclif's version, the majority were written within forty years of the translation being finished. Some of these copies are executed in the most costly manner. But we must beware lest we fall into exaggeration. The dictum of

[1] *F. and M.*, i., xxvii.

Marsh[1] that "Wyclif is the father of our later English prose, as Chaucer is the father of our later English poetry," though often repeated, will as little bear examination as "the popular idea of Wyclif sitting alone in the study at Lutterworth and making a complete new translation of the whole Bible with his own hands."[2] Wyclif's own version, as distinct from the smoother version of Purvey, according to Prof. Hales, "is in a language hardly to be called English." It owes, in fact, most of its importance, as literature, to its forming part of a wider national movement that has sometimes been overlooked. We refer to the displacement of French as the language of the educated.

In the earlier years of the fourteenth century the children of English gentlemen and merchants were taught French 'from the time that they be rocked in their cradles.' But before the end of the century (1385) a writer complains that 'in all the grammar schools of England children learn French and learn in English, and know no more French than their heels.' In 1362 the use of French in the law courts was forbidden by Parliament; the record henceforth was to be kept in Latin. In 1363, Parliament was first

[1] *Lectures Eng. Lang.*, 447, following Sharon Turner.
[2] Blunt, *Plain Account of Eng. Bible*, 17–19.

opened with an English speech. By the end of the century the use of French had so disappeared that Henry IV. could make it his boast that he knew the language, though his ambassadors were unable to communicate with Frenchmen except in Latin. But perhaps the best illustration of the rapidity of this remarkable change is given in the following:—In 1345, the ordinances of the Grocers were written in French for the use of the pepperers, in 1418 they had to be turned into English because they were no longer understood. The many French versions of the Bible that were in existence, of which Wyclif speaks with envy,[1] were therefore rapidly becoming of little service even to the upper classes. English was becoming conscious of itself, and the end of the fourteenth century was an age of translations. Of these, Wyclif's Bible was one only, not by any means the most widely read, or, from the standpoint of its influence on the English language, the most important.[2]

The student must also be on his guard against another popular belief. Protestant writers have too often assumed that the Roman Church in the Middle Ages prohibited the trans-

[1] Matt., 429–30. For the number of these French versions, see Lechler, 206 n. 1.

[2] See Wylie, ii. 388–90; Stubbs, ii. 434.

lation and circulation of the Scriptures in the vernacular. This frequent statement, though not without some justification, is, we think, a mistake. Vernacular Scriptures, provided the copy was without gloss or comment, were not, as a rule, suppressed until the Reformation. We have referred to the number of French Bibles. Germany, with its seventy-two partial versions and fifty complete translations, seventeen editions of which were printed before the great work of Luther, was not far behind.[1] Even Arundel, the persecutor of the Lollards, praises Anne of Bohemia, the queen of Richard II., because, 'though a stranger and foreigner, she was diligently meditating a translation of the Gospels into English.'[2] The statement of Forshall and Madden, though accepted by most historians, that "from the first the most active and powerful measures were taken to suppress (Wyclif's) version, that the manuscripts were burnt and destroyed,"[3] must therefore be rejected. Mr. Matthew is more accurate when he tells us that Purvey was fortunate in that "no formal condemnation of his English Bible was ever issued, or, so far as

[1] Gasquet, *O.E.B.*, 120; *Athenæum*, Dec. 22, 1883.

[2] For her 'gospel in three languages,' see Wyclif's *Polem. Works*, i. 168.

[3] *F. and M.*, i., xxxiii.

we know, attempted."[1] When the matter was raised in the Parliament of 1390, John of Gaunt, according to Ussher, made a remarkable protest. The nearest approach to prohibition seems to have been a 'constitution' of the Council of Oxford (1408), the effect, if not the design, of which was to save the version from glosses:

> It is dangerous, as St. Jerome declares, to translate the text of Holy Scripture out of one idiom into another, since it is not easy in translations to preserve the same meaning in all things. . . . We therefore command and ordain that henceforth no one translate any text (*aliquem textum*) of Holy Scripture into English or any other language in a book, booklet, or tract,[2] and that no one read any book, booklet, or tract of this kind lately made in the time of the said John Wyclif or since, or that hereafter may be made, either in part or wholly, either publicly or privately, under pain of excommunication, until such translation shall have been approved and allowed by the diocesan of the place, or if need be by the Provincial Council. He who shall act otherwise let him be punished as a fautor of heresy.[3]

This skilful provision gave the bishops all the powers they needed without committing the

[1] *Eng. Hist. Rev.* (1895), 95. Cf. More's testimony, *supra.*

[2] *Per viam libri libelli aut tractatus.* For Lyndwood's interpretation of this, see his *Provinciale* (1430) 286, where he points out that *libri* = whole Bible, *libelli* any particular book, and *tractatus* a treatise applying and translating the text of Holy Scripture. See *infra*, App. O (*a*), for the passage in full. The importance of Lyndwood lies in the fact that, whether his interpretation be right or wrong, viewed merely as a translation —it is far from the obvious one—as the chief lawyer of Canterbury and Oxford, it would be the one that ruled, as Lollards found to their cost.

[3] Wilkins, iii. 317.

Church to the condemnation of a translation, for the perfect orthodoxy of which—apart from its prologue and glosses—we have the high testimony of Dr. Gasquet. For though licences to have copies of this Bible were given to rich and powerful men and well-known priests, we never find that licences were granted to the poor. The price also was prohibitive; 'four marks and forty pence for a copy of the Gospels' (p. 280 *infra*). But to have a copy without licence was to have taken, as Lyndwood shows, the first step towards the fire. For whatever the theory of the Church, its practice was to suspect that the possession of the vernacular Scriptures by the laity was the sign of inner heresy. Of this we shall have abundant proof in a later chapter.[1]

The fact that Purvey's Bible was never completely printed until 1850 is significant of much.[2] In his effort to substitute the Scriptures for tradition Wyclif's fatal foe was not the hostility of the Church so much as the lack of the press. Nor was its effect at all considerable

[1] On this matter see App. P.

[2] Purvey's New Testament was, however, printed by Lewis 1731, Baber 1810, and 1841 by Bagster (in each case attributed to Wyclif). The older Wyclif translation of the New Testament was first published in 1848 by Lea Wilson. Of the Old Testament, Adam Clark had printed the Song of Solomon in his *Commentary*, 1808.

upon the later versions. In spite of the dictum of Marsh that "Tyndale is merely a full-grown Wyclif," Tyndale was not really, as in fact he himself protests, 'holpen with English of any that had interpreted the same or such like thing in the Scripture beforehand.' In later years the very existence of the version seems to have been forgotten, at least its authorship to have become unknown. Ussher, as we have seen, officially assigned it to John of Trevisa. In the next century Wesley could speak of "William Tyndale's Bible" as "the first English translation of the whole Bible."[1] Wyclif's version—the same might be said of much of his work—stands like the pyramids, isolated and lonely, not so much a living factor of continuity with some surviving present as a pillar of witness testifying to one of God's kings who, against such odds, builded this monument to the glory of God.

V

The lack of the printing press had already driven Wyclif into another means for the spread

[1] *Works*, vii. 46 (Sermon xci.). Wesley never mentions Wyclif at all; a significant fact, considering the width of his reading, of Wyclif's treatment by posterity. Wesley had evidently never read the great work of Lewis (1720), and may have been misled by Lewis printing the New Testament only (1731).

of his teaching.[1] He had unconsciously copied the methods of St. Francis, and fallen back upon the lost secret of the friars. From Oxford, as from Assisi two centuries before, Wyclif, like Wesley four centuries later, had sent out as early as the year 1377, his order of 'poor priests,' who in the highways and byways and by the village greens, sometimes even in the churches, should win the souls of the neglected. These Biblemen were not laymen, as is so often assumed.[2] The silence of Wyclif's enemies is sufficient proof of the contrary; even Courtenay only calls them 'unauthorised preachers,'—*i.e.* clerics without a bishop's licence. Some, no doubt, like Wesley's Holy Club, were men of culture, students attracted by his enthusiasm; the majority, especially after his expulsion from the University, were simple and unlettered clerks whom Wyclif's keen eye had detected among his parishioners at Lutterworth—'an unlettered man,' he said, 'with God's grace can do more for the Church than many graduates.'[3]

[1] The 'poor priests' undoubtedly preceded the Rising, in the organisation of which they were accused of playing a part. See Wright, *Polem. Poems*, 23–56, *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 124–5, and *Eul. Hist. Contin.*, iii. 351. Matt., 444; Wals., i. 324. For their favour, see *S.E. W.*, i. 209; *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, v. 532.

[2] *E.g.* Lechler, 195–6. But see *F.Z.*, 275; Wilkins, iii. 158.

[3] *Dialogus*, 54. Wyclif's intentions as to his 'poor priests' are best studied in his tract *The Six Yokes*.

Clad in russet robes of undressed wool, without sandals, purse, or scrip, a long staff in their hand, dependent for food and shelter on the goodwill of their neighbours, their only possession a few pages of Wyclif's Bible, his tracts and sermons, moving constantly from place to place—for Wyclif feared lest they should become 'possessioners,'—not given 'to games or to chess,' but 'to the duties which befit the priesthood, studious acquaintance with God's law, plain preaching of the word of God, and devout thankfulness,' Wyclif's 'poor priests,' like the friars before them, soon became a power in the land. How great must have been the influence of 'these wolves in sheep's clothing,' as Courtenay called them, is evident from the panic-stricken exaggeration of Knighton, 'that every second man you met was a Lollard.'[1]

Nothing more strongly marks the greatness of Wyclif's position than the reluctance of Courtenay to push matters to extremes against the head of this new sect. His followers were hunted down on every side, were expelled from the University, or forced to abjure, but Wyclif, though driven from Oxford, was left to close his days in peace at Lutterworth. He was neither declared a heretic nor threatened with

[1] For derivation of Lollard, see App. Q.

excommunication, while the story of his recantations is an obvious blunder by Knighton.[1] His health was already failing; a minor stroke had warned him of years of overwork. The consciousness that the end was near, the bitter isolation of his position, the suppression by persecution of his poor priests,[2] the recantation of Repyngdon and other schoolmen, only made him devote himself with feverish and almost incredible activity to the bringing out of tracts for the times, the editing of his sermons,[3] and the publication of an orderly summary of his doctrines. Hope still shone in him like a pillar of fire: 'Rest in the belief,' he writes, 'that the day shall come when the fiend's side shall hide, and truth shall shine without let.'[4] 'Now the prince of this world has spread his armies throughout the whole universe, but the King of kings has promised to assist his Church even unto the end of the world.' With tireless energy he once more repeated all his old attacks, especially holding up to ridicule the misdeeds of the friars, the claims of the Papacy,

[1] Knighton, ii. 156-8, 160-2, with remarks of Lumby in the preface. See Matt., xlvii.

[2] *S.E.W.*, i. 176, 205; iii. 106, 109, 179, 231, 249, 272-3 (not Wyclif's); *Trial.*, 379.

[3] For Wyclif's sermons, see App. R.

[4] *S.E.W.*, iii. 363.

and the blundering and immoral Flemish crusade of Bishop Spenser.[1] There are grounds for believing that the friars in their anger appealed to Rome, and that Urban replied by citing Wyclif to appear before his court. 'I have joyfully to tell to all men,' so ran his reply,

'the belief that I hold, and especially to the Pope, for I suppose that if my faith be rightful and given of God, the Pope will gladly confirm it, and that if my faith be error, the Pope will wisely amend it. . . . Above this, I suppose that the Pope is most obliged to the keeping of the gospel among all men that live here, for the Pope is highest vicar that Christ has here in earth. For the moreness (superiority) of Christ's vicar is not measured by earthly moreness, but by this, that this vicar follows Christ more closely by virtuous living. . . . Now Christ during the time He walked here was the poorest of men, and put from Him all manner of worldly lordship. From this I take it as a wholesome counsel that the Pope should abandon his worldly lordship to worldly lords, and move speedily all his clerks to do the same. For thus did Christ, and thus He taught His disciples, until the fiend had blighted this world. And if I err in this sentence (opinion) I will meekly be amended yea, even by death, for that I hope would be a good to me.' [2]

The 'good' was nearer than his enemies dreamed. The 'emaciated frame, spare and well nigh destitute of strength' had for some years only been kept alive by his indomitable will.

[1] I shall deal with this crusade in a further volume on the Schism and its consequences. See Wrong, *The Crusade of 1383*, and Wyclif, *De Cruciata*, ii. 579–632, and *Lat. Serm.*, iv. 34–42, 117–23.

[2] For this citation, see App. S.

According to 'John Horn, a priest of eighty years, who was a parochial priest with Wyclif for two years up to the date of Wyclif's death,' and who in the year 1441 gave his evidence to Dr. Gascoigne, 'Wyclif was paralysed'—a lesser stroke—'for two years before his death.' The end came suddenly. 'On the day of the Holy Innocents,' continues John Horn, 'as Wyclif was hearing mass in his church at Lutterworth, at the time of the elevation of the host, he fell down, smitten by a severe paralysis, especially in the tongue, so that neither then nor afterwards could he speak to the moment of his death.'[1] Three days later (Saturday, December 31, 1384) the tired worker entered into rest.

VI

The revolt of Wyclif was too local to be successful. Even in England itself only London, the Midlands, and the Eastern counties were affected.[2] But in the Middle Ages a local

[1] Lewis, *op. cit.* 336. Printed also in Vaughan, 577. Cf. also 180 n. 1. Wals., ii. 119, deliberately changes the date to the following day, December 29th, 'the feast of St. Thomas, whom he had prepared to attack.' But see Lechler, 421 n. 4. *S.E.W.*, iii. 330.

[2] For the geographical distribution of Lollardism, see the map in Trevelyan, 352. The *Chronicle of Meaux*, for instance, never mentions Lollardism at all.

reformation was impossible. No nation, much less a nation divided against itself, could afford to cut itself off from the most fundamental idea of medieval thought—the solidarity of Europe in one faith, one church. Even if Wyclif had succeeded in persuading his people, England was not powerful enough to stand alone in throwing off the yoke of Rome. The first result would have been a civil war, in which the North would have thrown in its lot with Catholic Scotland; the second, the preaching of a papal crusade against a nation of heretics wherein France and Spain would have found their opportunity for revenge. So when the nation realised how far Wyclif was leading them, the more prudent shrank back from the consequences of doctrines of which at first they had approved.

The secret of Wyclif's failure lay in the absence of any suitable environment for the spread and development of his ideas. Wyclif owed both his success and failure to his connection with scholasticism. His prestige as a schoolman secured him the opportunity for the spread of his heresies, and gave weight to the revolt that he started in Bohemia. But this very prestige in the schools ultimately acted against the success of his reform. Wyclif's writings and public life lack that strong personal

stamp which interest and attract so strongly in Bernard, Luther, and Wesley. In intellect he was probably their superior, in energy their equal, but his somewhat unimpassioned piety and genius lack the rapture which draws us to St. Bernard, the heart that makes us feel our kinship with Luther and Wesley. The man of to-day may laugh at Luther's struggles with a personal devil; but one secret of the success of Luther lay in his tremendous consciousness of the reality of sin, just as one secret of the failure of Wyclif lay in his doctrine that sin is but a negation—'that it has no idea,' to quote the language by which Wyclif the realist linked it on to his philosophy.[1] In his writings the schoolman oppresses us; but scholasticism, as we have seen, had become too formal to effect the intellectual emancipation at which Wyclif aimed. The love of truth, which in previous generations had given vitality to the speculations of Abailard and Thomas Aquinas, had degenerated into the spinning of cobwebs and paradoxes. The waters of life could not spring from the muddy soil; the fires of reform could not burn in the vitiated atmosphere. Never, before Wyclif, had such a voice been lifted against the might of Rome. In him the opposition of the Middle Ages finds its ablest

[1] See note, p. 161.

exponent. But the fulness of the times had not yet come. No intellectual revival had yet breathed life into the dry bones of European thought. Wyclif failed because he was an isolated though mighty force. The Reformation succeeded because it formed part of a movement even larger than itself.

Wyclif called upon the State to reform an unwilling clergy; his reform failed, as must all mere external movements, because in the spiritual earnestness of his life he stood almost alone. The interest of others in reform was that of politics and greed. As Dr. Rashdall has well remarked, "It was the misfortune of his position that he had to attack abuses at a time when their abolition was but too likely to be followed by worse abuses, and to defend the rights of the State at a time when its rights were likely to be asserted in practice for the satisfaction of a clique of lay nobles more greedy, more unscrupulous, and more incompetent than the respectable ecclesiastical statesmen" whom Wyclif attacked. We mark also an absence of spiritual force even in Wyclif's own teaching. In part this was the result of his philosophy. He identifies too completely *knowing* and *being*. In consequence, his theology is ethical and practical; he scarcely laid what the late reformers would have called a

sufficient foundation in grace. The great foe that stalks like Goliath through all his works is avarice; the great need on which he insists is a good life and the 'three theological virtues,' faith, hope, and charity. 'Working by right life, ended after God's will, maketh a man God's child.'[1] We feel as we read that he would have had little sympathy with some forms at least of Luther's teaching. To Wyclif, the herald of stern Puritan morality, the friend of the poor, the epistle of St. James would be rather the marrow of the Gospel than "an epistle of straw."

Not even his bitterest opponent can deny Wyclif's intense love of, and sympathy with, the poor. Their needs are at all times uppermost in his thoughts. His sorrow for their woes runs through his works like a wail of love, and redeems his fiercest denunciations, his most impossible schemes. Half his writings might be compressed into his bitter cry: 'Poor men have naked sides, and dead walls have great plenty of waste gold.'[2] Wyclif, in fact, had he not been hampered by his scholastic training, might have figured in the Roman calendar as a second St. Francis. In more

[1] *S.E.W.*, i. 21. See the deeply interesting *Five Questions on Love*, *S.E.W.*, iii. 183; also iii. 219.

[2] Matt., 91. Cf. *S.E.W.*, iii. 170.

than one of his doctrines the critic may discern resemblance to the teaching of the saint of Assisi. His 'poor priests' were a revival of the 'Little Brothers.' He constantly speaks as if poverty were the duty of the whole Church. But we miss the sweetness and light, the radiant joyousness, the absence of all aggressiveness save love, which make the Italian immortal. The very fierceness of Wyclif's attacks upon the friars witnesses to his kinship with them. He hated them with all the hatred which an earnest man feels for those who have degraded his special ideal or disappointed his fondest hopes. But these attacks should not blind us to Wyclif's spiritual lineage. The Reformer was, in fact (as Dr. Brewer pointed out), "the genuine descendant of the friars, turning their wisdom against themselves, and carrying out the principles he had learned from them to their legitimate political conclusions."[1] Perhaps it would be more accurate to classify him with the Spiritual Friars, whose ideas and phraseology he in part assimilated;[2] though, with English common sense, he abandoned their apocalyptic ravings.

We see the same practical rather than theo-

[1] *Mon. Francis.*, i. p. lix. See also p. 164 *supra*.

[2] Cf. *De Dom. Div.*, 5 n. 15; also *S.E.W.*, iii. 212, and especially iii. 304 (very doubtful if by Wyclif), 360, i. 314.

logical drift of thought in the remarkably strong appreciation which Wyclif has of the real humanity of Jesus, an idea most unusual in a medieval. Most of all does this appear in his early scholastic treatise, *De Benedicta Incarnatione.* Here his realism leads him to identify Christ with the *communis homo.* He is the universal man who is identical with all his brethren. This 'literal reality of Christ's human nature is a most precious jewel' which he will not surrender. Christ and His humanity must never be divided. "The Christ of Aquinas is not our brother, not a man, but only a ghostly simulacrum";[1] the Christ of Wyclif is flesh of our flesh.

To the end of his life Wyclif, to quote his own confession, 'stammered out many things which he was unable clearly to make good.' He wanders about in worlds not realised. We may observe of him what was said of Montaigne, that "he knows perfectly well what he says, but does not know what he is going to say." Like all prophets, whether of the Old or New Covenant, he saw through a glass darkly the things which later generations have seen face to face. Like other men who have ventured on

[1] Bruce, *Humiliation*, 79. The *De Ben. Incarn.* is wrongly dated by its editor, Harris, as 1367. It belongs to the early days of his doctorate (Shirley), *i.e.* after 1372.

the great task of forming a scheme of religion for themselves, Wyclif often is and must be inconsistent.

Considered as a statesman, Wyclif was not sufficiently opportunist. For instance, in 1382, he took no part in the struggle of the 'artists' and seculars for the independence of the University, though largely fought in his behalf. In his idealism he even regarded the loss of Oxford with indifference, fatal though it proved to his cause. Like most schoolmen, he trusted too much in his logic, and allowed it to lead him too far. We see this in his proposal to include the universities in his scheme of disendowment, and in his advocacy of a system of voluntaryism which would have reduced the clergy to beggars, to the level, in fact, of the mendicant friars whom he ceaselessly denounced. An even better illustration will be found in the extravagant length to which he carried his demand that the life of the priest should be purely spiritual. He wished to narrow down their studies to theology merely; 'the lore that Christ taught us is enough for this life; other lore' should be 'suspended.' Thus Wyclif destroyed his influence among the educated, and reduced his movement to an illiterate sect.[1] Nor did he know how to gain the reform that lay next

[1] *S.E.W.*, iii. 122, ii. 71; cf. iii. 326, i. 225, 310.

to hand by keeping back ideas not immediately acceptable. He failed also to see the injury he did his cause by mixing himself up with doubtful transactions.[1] He allowed his hatred of the false to get the better of his judgment, while by the vehemence of his language he estranged many. But "in spite of some crudity of thought and utterance,"[2] Wyclif is entitled to the judgment of Trevelyan, that he was "the only man of his age who saw deeply into the needs of the present and the possibilities of the future." Even the vehemence of his temper—Mr. Matthew claims that we should err if we called it fanaticism[3]—was not without its advantages. A calmer spirit would have counted the cost where Wyclif placed himself at the head of a forlorn hope. Men

[1] *E.g.* the murder by the Duke's people of Haule and Schakyl. See Trevelyan, 87–96, for this incident. Wyclif's paper on the matter is in *De Eccl.*, cc. vii.–xvi.

[2] Three illustrations may be given: (*a*) His crude view on marriage (*Trialogus*, 315-25, 283 n. 2), especially his view of the marriage of brothers and sisters (318). On the other hand, the *Wedded Men and Wives* (*S.E.W.*, iii. 188) is very sound (if, indeed, it be his). (*b*) His advocacy of a plan of campaign for the refusal of tithes to a bad priest (*S.E.W.*, iii. 176, 418). (*c*) It is better to plough or weave on the Sabbath than to be lazy in church, *Polem. Work's*, i. 326. Nor is Pastor (i. 159) altogether without justification in calling him a pantheist. See note, p. 137 *supra*.

[3] See some doubtful remarks, Matt., xl.–xlii., and compare Arnold, *S.E.W.*, iii. p. ix.

whose mission it is to put the crooked straight sometimes succeed because they see nothing but the crooked.

We believe that the failure of Wyclif's premature reformation was, on the whole, for the good of the Church. His conception was altogether too Erastian, and would have made the Church a mere department of the State. The enlightened public opinion, the action and reaction of the Puritans, the political liberty which modified the Erastianism of the later Reformation, could have found no place in the England of the century after Wyclif. The Wars of the Roses had yet to do their work of destruction, the power of a brutal nobility had yet to be broken, the towns must grow in consciousness of rights and liberty, the serfs had yet to win their freedom by other means than revolt, before the England of Wyclif should be ripe for the great Revolution.

Finally, Wyclif's revolt was too negative. He rather swept away than established, though in his assertion of the supreme authority of Scripture he laid the foundation upon which later ages should build. But his teaching, though containing the principles of the sixteenth century Protestants, lacked the definiteness of construction, especially of theological recon-

struction, without which all reformation is incomplete. He abolished existing forms of Church government without devising, like Calvin, any scheme that should take the place. But in the providence of God the removing of the things that are shaken must always come first; the receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved belongs to a later age.

Milton, we fear, allowed his patriotism to run away with his judgment when he asserted: "Had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wyclif, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Hus and Jerome—no, nor the names of Luther or of Calvin—had ever been known: the glory of reforming all our neighbours had been completely ours."[1] Nevertheless, Wyclif may justly be called the Morning Star of the Reformation; he was a herald of a new age. Though in some respects his life reads like that of one born out of due time, his work was not without result. His critical spirit prepared the way for future reconstructions, and his teaching, though seemingly buried with him, lay like the seed, during the long winter of the fifteenth century, waiting for the coming of a brighter day.

[1] *Areopagitica*, Bohn, ii. p. 91.

CHAPTER V

THE ENGLISH LOLLARDS

Lollardi sunt zizania
Spinae, vepres ac lollia
Quae vastant hortum vineae.
POLITICAL POEMS, i. 232.

"*Who, toiling hard against the stream,*
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream."

(i.) *Sources:* Almost the same as for Wyclif. The relative importance has, however, altered. The official proceedings in WILKINS, *Concilia*, iii.; RYMER, *Foedera*, and *Rotuli Parl.*, are the most valuable. The *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* (SHIRLEY) still continues of great service. KNIGHTON, who lived in Leicester, knows the Lollards of the Midlands. WALSINGHAM can rarely be trusted unless supported by others. PECOCK'S *Repressor* (ed. Babington, R.S.) shows the state of the controversy in the fifteenth century, according to a candid and unfortunate opponent. Add also GREGORY, *Chronicle of London*, ed. GAIRDNER (1876).

Three additional sources must be mentioned, though published a century later. BALE: *Brief Chronicle concerning the Examination and Death of Sir John Oldcastle* (1544), in his *Select Works* (Parker Soc., 1849), condensed in FOXE, iii. 320 ff., abridged in ARBER'S *English Garner*, vi. 119–133. FOXE, *Acts and Monuments* (ed. 8 vols., R.T.S.). When Foxe quotes from official documents he is fairly trustworthy, though sometimes given to leaving out what he does not approve of. See, for instances, JOSEPH STEVENSON (S.J.), *The Truth about John Wyclif*, 1885, cc. vii. and viii.; also the cases of William Sparke and John Sparke of Somersham in *Ch. Quart. Rev.*, xix. 80, and elsewhere. (The remainder of Stevenson's work is malicious and inaccurate.) *The Examination of Master William Thorpe*, in *English Garner*, vi. 42–118; BALE, *Select Works*, 62–133; FOXE, iii. 249–85.

For other minor sources, see the notes, especially App. T.

(ii.) *Modern Writers:* The able and judicious surveys of RAMSAY, *Lancaster and York*; WYLIE, *England under Henry IV.*, 4 vols., first ed. (the notes are a vast storehouse of references on almost every conceivable subject); and the brilliant additional chapters of TREVELYAN, *England in the Age of Wyclif*. For political matters add STUBBS. The articles in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.* are of varying ability, but should never be neglected. The best are Repyngdon, Hereford, Purvey (by Hales) and Oldcastle (Tait). Add also GAIRDNER, *Studies Eng. Hist.* (1881), 1–77.

THE ENGLISH LOLLARDS

I

THE influence which Wyclif exerted was neither limited to England nor descended with him to the grave. Among the many fictions concerning Wyclif that at one time were accepted as history must be reckoned the story, first set afloat, it would appear, by Polydore Vergilius, and adopted by Bale. The great Reformer, we are told, in his last years, 'sought a voluntary exile rather than change his opinions.' So he came to Bohemia, 'already slightly infected with heresy,' and was 'received by that rude race with great honour.' In return he established them in the belief 'that little reverence was due to the priesthood, and no consideration at all to the Roman Pontiff.' This fable of Polydore Vergilius is one of those guesses at truth which anticipate modern research. 'O good God,' added an indignant Czech scribe, condemned to copy out the *Polemical Works* of Wyclif (ii. 685), 'do not let this man come into our beloved

Bohemia.' His prayer was not answered. Wyclif lived again in Bohemia; Hus and Jerome of Prague continued the work which he had begun.

Buddensieg tells us that he has seen in a Bohemian Psalter of 1572 a remarkable picture. Wyclif is represented as striking a spark, Hus is kindling the coals, while Luther is brandishing the lighted torch. The picture is correct, at any-rate in its belief in a close connection between the reformers. For though Hus did not embrace all the ideas of the Englishman, the ideas which he did embrace, and for which he was condemned at Constance, were copied by him into his Latin treatises almost verbatim from the works of Wyclif. The Englishman was right who tells us that as he listened to the guarded answers of Hus before the Council, he thought that he saw standing before him, 'the very Wyclif.'[1] By a singular instance of historical injustice, the doctrine of the plagiarist came to be regarded as almost the original, while Wyclif, from whom he had borrowed, receded into obscurity. For the burning of Hus long placed his relations to the English Reformer in a somewhat false light. "The flames which rose from the pile at Constance on the 6th of July 1415 displayed to posterity the form of Hus in clearer illumination

[1] Palacky, *Documenta J. Hus vitam illust.*, 277.

than that of his English colleague. Only deep in the background has been discerned, since then, the shadow of that man for whose doctrine Hus went to the stake." [1]

Hus in his turn handed on the sacred fires to Luther. In February 1529, after pondering the matter over with Melancthon, Luther was obliged to write to Spalatin: 'I have hitherto taught and held all the opinions of Hus without knowing it. With a like unconsciousness has Staupitz taught them. We are all of us Hussites without knowing it. I do not know what to think for amazement.' The reader must not assume that by this confession Luther intended to hint that he had become Luther by the help of Hus. His real meaning is expressed when in the same letter he goes on to explain that 'Paul and Augustine are Hussites to the letter.' He was feeling his way rather to a doctrine of evangelical continuity than hinting at any relation of cause and effect.[2]

Bohemia and Germany were not the only lands to which the influence of Wyclif penetrated. In 1407 a Lollard preacher, John Reseby by name, fled into Scotland to escape his English persecutors, "probably," as Trevelyan

[1] Loserth, *Wyclif and Hus*, 177.

[2] *Letters* (ed. De Wette), i. 425; in Beard's *Reformation*, 30.

remarks, "the first Presbyterian to set foot on that kindly soil. Whether his eyes were delighted with angelic visions of future kirk assemblies, it is for poets to say." Reseby himself was soon burnt at the stake in Perth on the accusation of one Lawrence Lindors. But his teaching and that of other Lollards who fled across the border could not be burnt out. "In the scrolls of Glasgow," writes John Knox, "is found mention of one, whose name is not expressed, that in the year of God 1422 was burned for heresy"; while in 1431 "Paul Craw, a Bohemian, was committed to the secular judge (for our bishops follow Pilate, who both did condemn and wash his hands)" and "was consumed in the said city of St. Andrews." But, in spite of these measures, Scotch Lollards seem to have survived, chiefly, it would appear, among the mountains and moss hags of Galloway until the coming of Knox.[1] For in 1494 we read of "thirty persons remaining, some in Kyle Stewart, some in King's Kyle, and some in Cunninghame," among whom we notice the Lady of Pokely and the Lady of Stairs. "These were called the Lollards of Kyle," and, judging from the thirty-four articles of their faith, which

[1] Trevelyan, 353–4; John Knox, *Hist. Ref. Scotland* (ed. W. M'Gavin, 1831), pp. 3–6. Robertson, vii. 301.

Knox has printed, had evidently not departed widely from the teaching of Wyclif.

With the revolt of Hus and the Bohemians we shall deal later. Our present chapter must be confined to the aftermath which the Reformer reaped in England. The story of the later Lollards will enable us to see whether Wyclif's work was the "isolated movement," without permanent effect, which historians have generally represented it to be.[1]

II

Lollardism, like Methodism, began in the university. Like Methodism, it was speedily driven out. Of the scholastic Lollards it may be written that logic makes no martyrs. The most prominent of all was Philip Repyngdon,[2] an Augustinian canon of St. Mary de Pré, at Leicester, the famous abbey where Wolsey died. The abbey was not the place to which we should naturally look for a reformer. Its wealth was vast—over £1000 a year at the dissolution,—with twenty-six parish churches appropriated to it. Repyngdon evidently found himself in uncongenial surroundings. He obtained leave to study at Oxford, and entered Broadgate Hall,

[1] *E.g.* Wakeman's popular *Hist. Ch. Eng.*, 152.

[2] See also p. 188. For sources, see App. T.

now Pembroke College. On his way to the university he had shown his sympathies by 'preaching at Brackley the doctrine of Wyclif concerning the sacrament of the altar.' He soon obtained the reputation of being the 'most learned man of his age.' After a short but stormy six months of Lollardry, Repyngdon, whose heterodoxy was rather an antagonism to the influence at Oxford of the regulars and a desire "to breathe a modern spirit into the monastic life," was the first to yield. He publicly abjured his heresies, and was restored to his place in the schools (October 23, 1382).

Repyngdon's relapse was complete. He had done with 'Lollardy,' and entered on a rapid course of advancement. In 1394 he was elected the abbot of his old monastery; four times did he become the chancellor of his university. He shared the success of his intimate friend King Henry IV., who made him his confessor, '*clericus specialissimus*.' Of the closeness of this friendship we have a striking illustration. After the battle of Shrewsbury and his great victory over the Percies, Henry

'straightway made proclamation through the whole of his army that if there were any servant of the Abbot of Leicester there he should present himself before him. Immediately there came forward a servant of the said abbot, to whom the King gave the ring from his finger, and at the same time 100 shillings,

bidding him go with all haste to the Lord Philip, the Abbot of Leicester, and not to use any delay till he had given him the said ring, and that he was thus to say to him: "The king lives, having obtained victory over his enemies; blessed be God!"'

A letter of his,[1] dated May 4, 1401, is still extant, in which he tells the King, with much frankness, many compliments, and sixteen quotations from Scripture, of the evils of his government, without suggesting, however, a single remedy.

'May God,' he writes, 'take away the veil from before your eyes, that you may clearly perceive what you promised before God, at your happy entrance into the kingdom of England, and what has been your performance of your promises, so that you may remedy what is wanting, while you return thanks to God if anything has been done. May God give you a heart teachable and tractable to perform aright your kingly office, and to understand clearly and provide a remedy for the miseries of the people.'

This letter has received somewhat extravagant praise. "It may be doubted," writes the editor, "whether the annals of the Church present a more worthy example of religious duty well discharged." So far from resenting Repyngdon's boldness, the easy-going monarch who had, be it remembered, asked his advice, rewarded him with the bishopric of Lincoln (March 1405).[2] There he assisted in

[1] In the *Correspondence of Bekynton* (R.S.), i. 151–4 (cf. Preface by Williams, lxii.), or Adam Usk, 63–7.

[2] For date, see Wylie, i. 484, corrected by iii. 348 n.

the persecution of his former friends. 'No bishop of this land,' said Archbishop Arundel to the Lollard Thorpe, 'pursueth now more sharply them that hold thy way than he doth.' On September 18, 1408, he received the purple at Siena,[1] among a batch of new cardinals made by the recusant Gregory XII. By his inclusion of Repyngdon, Gregory probably hoped to win over Henry to his side. In this he was disappointed. For on November 12th the King wrote to Gregory protesting his surprise, and in the following December announced his intention of despatching representatives to the Council of Pisa.[2] The time had not yet come, as Repyngdon found, "when the cardinalate could be held in England with an English bishopric" (*Ch. Quart. Rev.*).

Thus Repyngdon had his reward, and died full of honours in 1424. By his last will he desired to be buried 'naked in a sack,' under the open heavens; but his friends, interpreting probably his real wishes, placed him in Lincoln Cathedral, with a grand inscription over his tomb. Be it remembered to his credit that while he was bishop—he resigned February 1420, choosing

[1] For circumstances, see Creighton, i. 218, who dates May 8. But see Wylie, iii. 348.

[2] Wylie, iii. 366–7; Rymer, viii. 567.

rather "to hold by his cardinalate"—he refused to obey the orders of the Council of Constance and disinter the remains of his friend and master from the grave at Lutterworth.

The career of Repyngdon is typical. Of Wyclif's Oxford disciples it may be written that their "Lollardy was as the seed which fell upon stoney places; it sprang up quickly in a shallow soil, and withered in a moment before the sun of authority." Aston, it is true, made some show of resistance. When brought up before Courtenay at the Blackfriars (June 18, 1832) and requested to speak in Latin, he went on louder than before in English; his object was to reach the citizens. For this purpose also he caused a handbill of his doctrine to be scattered broadcast. In the September of the same year we find him at Gloucester denouncing the brisk trade in papal pardons, whereby Bishop Spencer was raising funds for his blundering and immoral Flemish crusade. But on November 27, 1382, he too made his recantation at Oxford. He afterwards atoned for his early fall, became an ardent Lollard missioner, and, according to Thorpe, was constant 'right perfectly unto his life's end.'[1]

Among the scholars who had aided Wyclif in

[1] So Thorpe in his examination (Bale, *Select Works*, 133, who must be wrong in the date—1382—he gives of Aston's death).

his translation of the Bible, Nicholas Hereford and John Purvey stood pre-eminent. Hereford was engaged upon the Old Testament, and had progressed, as we have seen, as far as Baruch, when he was cited with the others to appear before Courtenay at the Blackfriars (June 1832). On his excommunication he appealed to the Pope.[1] As Trevelyan pithily remarks, "He was not the first or the last to imagine that if only he could get a hearing from the Pope he could move the Catholic Church out of old tradition into new paths. Like many other appellants, he found that he had to do not so much with the Pope as with the cardinals," who sentenced Hereford to imprisonment for life. In the summer of 1385 an insurrection in the streets led to his release by the Roman mob. Hereford returned to England, and in 1837 joined Aston in a preaching tour through the west. He too, in the end, relapsed and became 'a cursed enemy

[1] For the value of this appeal *qua* appeal, see Maitland, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, Jan. 1901, 38-42. Knighton, ii. 170, says he recanted, and prints the recantation. The first part agrees with the general protest in *F.Z.*, 319 (or Wilkins, iii. 161); the second part is plainly inconsistent with *F.Z.*, 326, 329. Knighton has either muddled together the general protest of 1382 and Hereford's recantation in 1391, or else this form was prepared for them to sign, and they struck out all save the first part. Cf. case of Oldcastle, p. 66 n. 1.

of the truth' (1391). For this he was rewarded by the King with 'a pipe of Gascon wine' and the chancellorship, afterwards the treasurership, of Hereford. In 1393 he assisted at the trial of his fellow-countryman and Lollard Walter Brute. In November 1401, we again find him 'declaiming stoutly' against his old associates, 'conscience alone moving him.' After other preferments, he entered in his old age the Charterhouse at Coventry (1417). There, presumably, he died, and went to his own place.

The case of another scholastic Lollard, Walter Brute,[1] is of equal interest. This learned Welshman—'sinner, layman, husbandman, and Christian, having my offspring of the Britons'—was a graduate of Merton. On being denounced to the Bishop of Hereford as a 'child of Belial,' he made answer by 'diverse scrolls of paper,' of which the Bishop complained that they were 'too short and obscure.' Whereupon Brute put in an 'exhibit,' or defence, which, whatever may be said about its 'obscurity,' is certainly not 'too short,' for it fills fifty closely printed pages

[1] Foxe, iii. 135–187. The document shows traces of the *Eternal Gospel* and the same influences that produced *The Last Age of the Church* (see *supra*, p. 97, note). The number of the beast is '*dux cleri*' (p. 185). Notice also the striking phrase, so characteristic of the Spiritual Friars, 'Julius Cæsar unto the end of Frederic, the last Emperor of Rome' (p. 146).

of Foxe. To this document, of great importance to the student of the later Lollard theology, we shall refer again. For the present, we note that Brute, like the other apostles from Oxford, made a public but somewhat doubtful recantation in the churchyard. Of what afterwards became of him there is no record.

Not less disastrous was the relapse of John Purvey, 'the library of Lollards,' as Foxe calls him, and 'the glosser of Wyclif,' of whose mind he had 'drunk deep' and whose 'inseparable companion' he had been to the end. The services which Purvey, a native of Lathbury, near Newport Pagnel,[1] had rendered to the cause cannot be exaggerated. To him, even more than to Wyclif himself, we owe the famous Bible (1388), on the revision of which he was still engaged when, in 1387, he joined Hereford and Aston in the west. His version, therefore, was probably first published in Bristol. In 1390 Purvey was thrown into prison, and occupied his time with writing a commentary on the Apocalypse, 'from lectures,' adds Bale, 'formerly delivered by Wyclif.' In 1395 he assisted the Wyclif party in Parliament by writing a thoughtful indictment of the corrup-

[1] *F. and M.*, i., xxiv.; Purvey, *Remons.*, xiii., from the registers of Bishop Bokingham.

tions of the Church, entitled the *Ecclesiæ Regimen* or *Remonstrance to Parliament.*[1]

How long Purvey lay in prison is uncertain, but in January 1401[2] he was brought before Convocation along with Sawtre and two others. After being 'grievously tormented and punished in the Archbishop's prison at Saltwood Castle,' Purvey read a recantation in English at sermon time at St. Paul's Cross (Sunday, March 6, 1401), and was rewarded in the following August with the living of West Hythe. 'There,' said Arundel to Thorpe, 'I heard more complaints about his covetousness for tithes than I did of all men that were advanced within my diocese.' On October 8, 1403, he resigned his living; and if it be correct that in 1421 he was imprisoned by Chichele, it would appear that he once more resumed his preaching. But of his later career—he was still living in 1427—we know nothing, and can only imagine

> the glimmering of twilight,—
> Never glad, confident morning again!

amid which the life of this "lost leader" closed.

But one Lollard priest and friend of Wyclif

[1] For the writings of Purvey, see App. U.

[2] So Wilkins, iii. 260; not Feb. 29, 1400, as *F.Z.*, 400, followed by *F. and M.*, Moulton, Vaughan, and others, unless indeed there were two trials.

at least showed no lack of steadfastness. Few books of the period are more interesting than the *Examination of Master William Thorpe*, written by himself or his friends, in 1407, 'and put forth in the English that now is used for our southern men; and I intend hereafter, with the help of God, to put it forth in his own old English, which shall serve well, I doubt not, both for the northern men and the faithful brethren of Scotland.' This book was first edited, as we see above, 'from a text copied out and corrected by Master William Tyndale.'[1] But dialectic editors and correctors —'I wish,' writes Foxe (iii. 249), 'they had left it in his own natural speech wherein it was first written'—have not succeeded in impairing its marvellous freshness. For twenty years Thorpe was an itinerant Lollard preacher, chiefly in the north. In 1397 he was arrested and imprisoned, but shortly afterwards set free, on the banishment of Archbp. Arundel. In 1407 he was again seized and committed to gaol, first at Shrewsbury, then afterwards at the Archbishop's own prison of Saltwood, in Kent. There Arundel and his clerks spent many days in interrogating him in person.

[1] For its place among other books prohibited by Henry VIII., see Wilkins, iii. 739; cf. Foxe, iv. 238.

Thorpe, nothing daunted, told out boldly the story of his life; how his friends desired to have made him a priest, but he had no mind to it. At last, when he saw that they would not be comforted, he asked for leave to seek the counsel of those priests whom he heard to be of best repute for wise and holy living. When asked, 'Who are those holy men and wise?' he answered—

'Sir, Master John Wyclif was holden of full many men the greatest clerk that they knew then living, and therefore he was named a passing ruely man, and an innocent in his living, and therefore great men communed oft with him, and they loved so his learning that they writ it, and busily enforced them to rule themselves hereafter. Others there were also with whom he had communed long and oft—Aston, Repyngdon, Hereford, and Purvey, and more; and though some of those men be contrary to the learning that they taught before, I know well that their learning was true that they taught, and therefore, with the help of God, I purpose to hold and use the learning which I heard of them; but after the works that they now do, I will not do, with God's help.'—*Eng. Garn.*, vi. 63.

Brave words, which we trust were fulfilled, though of his fate nothing is known. He probably sickened and died of the fever that haunted his 'foul, unhonest prison.'

In Oxford, by this time, the cause of Lollardism was hopeless. When, in 1382, Wyclif was driven out of the university, he seems to have comforted himself with the idea that his appeal

to the "masses" would more than compensate for this loss of the "classes." The idea was fatal: with the exception of the Franciscan revival, no religious movement has ever sprung from the people; nor can any revival be permanent or universal which deliberately abandons the centres of learning. Both Courtenay and Arundel were aware of this; they determined to deal with heresy by cutting off the springs that fed it. The attempt was not without serious difficulties, even for archbishops aided by the Crown. The University had long since emancipated herself from the control of its diocesan, the Bishop of Lincoln. The great distance from the see, over 120 miles, had fought on her side. Exemption from the visitation of the Archbishop seemed also to be secured by a bull of Boniface IX. in 1395. Oxford was jealous of these rights, and determined to uphold her freedom from interference. We see this when, in 1411, Arundel attempted a visitation for the suppression of heresy. He found St. Mary's fortified against him, and the seculars armed with bows and arrows. The Archbishop retreated, but wrote to the King to complain 'with what insolence he had been received by a company of boys! Only after much struggle was the bull of Boniface revoked by John XXIII. (1411), and the way

clear for the crushing of Lollardry.[1] The colleges were severally visited, and obstinate Lollards deprived of their fellowships.

Sympathy with the doctrines of the Reformer was not altogether extinct in the schools. We see this in the daring forgery purporting to be signed by the chancellor and masters assembled in the 'cellar'[2] of St. Mary's on October 5, 1406. This document, or a copy, 'two students had brought, with the seal of the university, to Prague,' 'which the said Master John [Hus] had read aloud in a sermon,' and had shown the seal. Asked further on the matter at Constance, Hus had replied that one of the students was 'Nicholas Faulfiss (Foulfish), of good memory, with another, I know not whom. Faulfiss had died somewhere or other between Spain and England.' 'That Faulfiss,' laughed his opponents, 'was not an Englishman, but a Bohemian,' who carried off to Prague as a relic 'a little chip of stone from the tomb of the said Wyclif.'[3]

[1] Wilkins, iii. 336; Bekynton, 276–8. Rashdall, *Univs.*, ii. 414–440.

[2] I interpret this, by Rashdall, ii. 374, as the Lesser Congregation. The Great Congregation met in the choir.

[3] Palacky, *Doc.*, 313. Wood, *Hist. Univ. Ox.*, i. 203. I do not see how it can be genuine. Cf. Poole, *De Civ. Dom.*, i. p. ix. In Wilkins, iii. 336 (*b*), we find mention of a similar forgery.

This forgery, though of uncertain value as evidence of the strength of Lollardism in the university, bears witness, at anyrate, to the continued greatness of Wyclif's reputation. 'His conversation,' we read, 'from his youth to his death was so praiseworthy and honest in the university that he never gave any offence, but in answering, reading, preaching, and determining behaved himself laudably as a valiant champion of the truth, and catholicly vanquished by sentences of Holy Scripture all such as by their wilful beggary blasphemed the religion of Christ. This doctor was not convicted of heretical pravity, or by our prelates delivered to be burned after his burial.' 'God grant,' it concludes, 'that our bishops may never condemn a man so honest, so peerless in our university in logic, philosophy, divinity, morality, and speculation.'

Protest, forgery, and the fortification of St. Mary's were alike useless. On Nov. 28, 1407,[1] Arundel held a provincial Synod at St. Frideswide's, Oxford, which ruthlessly crushed all freedom of thought in the schools.[2] No tract

[1] The thirteen constitutions were finally promulgated in a Convocation at St. Paul's, Jan. 14, 1409. See Wilkins, iii. 314–20; and, for their interpretation, Lynwood, 283 ff. The dates of this Oxford incident are very confused.

[2] Wilkins, iii. 172 (? date), 315–19. Lyndwood, 283 ff.

or treatise written by Wyclif and his contemporaries was to circulate in or be 'copied by the stationers' unless 'unanimously sanctioned' by 'at least twelve doctors and masters of Oxford or Cambridge.' If such sanction was given, 'the original must remain perpetually in a university chest.' Henceforth no speculation must be allowed on 'the sacrament of the altar or other sacraments of the Church' or any article of faith. 'Masters teaching the boys in arts or grammar' must not allow 'exposition of Scripture, except as the text was wont to be expounded of old.' Disputations about the worship of the Cross, the adoration of saints, images, pilgrimages and the like were forbidden. Every warden of 'college, hall, hostel, inn, or entry' must hold an inquiry once a month into the opinions of his scholars. Twelve censors also were appointed, who succeeded, after much deliberation and dispute, in culling from the works of the master 267 passages that seemed to them heretical or unsound, a copy of which should henceforth be kept in the library of St. Mary's as a warning to future students.[1] As a result, fourteen of Wyclif's works were solemnly burned at Carfax, 1410, and the influence of the Reformer, so it was thought, for ever destroyed.

[1] Wilkins, 339–49. Cf. Palacky, *Doc.*, 185, 328, 451.

The censors were not unanimous. Two of the twelve were against pronouncing any verdict at all, one of whom, Master Richard Flemyng, must serve as our last and most remarkable example of the Oxford Lollards. This 'elegant' young Yorkshireman had recently served as proctor of the Northern Nation, and was now a student in theology. With four other masters of arts—'learners of errors,' as Arundel called them—he stood out in defence of the condemned opinions. The Archbishop (Arundel) stormed against them as 'beardless blabbering boys who tried to read before they could spell, and deserved to be well birched.' He would show them that he was 'no reed shaken with flame'—'*arundinem flamine agitatam*,' with a curious pun on his own name and that of Flemyng. If they did not give in within ten days, they should pay the penalty of their disobedience. Flemyng found that his religious opinions were inconvenient; he was already a canon of York, and at all costs of conscience his career in the Church must not be sacrificed. So he gave way, and had his reward. In the course of time he succeeded the ex-Lollard Repyngdon as Bishop of Lincoln. There he showed more than the usual zeal of a pervert, and covered himself with infamy by doing that which Repyngdon had always refused

to do. For in 1428, at the peremptory bidding of Pope Clement VIII., Flemyng tore the remains of Wyclif from the grave at Lutterworth, burned them to ashes, and cast them into the Swift. Thus, in the memorable words of Fuller, "the little river conveyed Wyclif's remains into the Avon, Avon into the Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they to the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." Flemyng himself sleeps in a splendid chantry which he built at Lincoln. The stately college which he founded at Oxford to help to baffle heresy—Lincoln College (1429), the home of Wesley—perpetuates his memory, while witnessing, by its later history, to the folly of his attempt to crush God's Word, or limit the freedom of thought.

III

If we turn from Oxford to the nation at large we find that the revolt against the Church was more successful and continuous. For some years, even after John of Gaunt had withdrawn his support, there are signs of widespread sympathy with Lollardism among the country gentry, not without official countenance from the Commons and some of the barons. When, in July 1382,

Richard issued letters patent to all the bishops of the province of Canterbury, bidding them arrest all Lollards and fling them into 'the bishops' prisons until they repent of the wickedness of their errors,' as he 'wished to have no heresy in his kingdom,' the Commons, in the following October, insisted on the mandate being withdrawn. 'It was not their intention,' they said, 'to be tried for heresy, nor to bind over themselves or their descendants to the prelates more than their ancestors had been in time past.'[1] But we must beware lest we assume that the knights of the shires were Lollards in disguise; their sympathy with dissent was rather a dislike to clerical interference with liberty, not unmixed with a lingering hankering after John of Gaunt's scheme of disendowment.

How strong continued this last influence among the gentry is shown on more than one occasion. In the Parliament of October 1404—the 'illiterate Parliament,' as the monks dubbed it, from the exclusion of all lawyers—a proposition was made that the lands of the clergy

[1] Wilkins, iii. 156; *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 141. But the protest of the Commons seems to have been of little value, for in December 1384 the letters patent were confirmed, and extended to the province of York (see translation of same, Gee and Hardy, 110). In the statutes of the Reformation period, the statute of 5 R. II. is treated as valid. See Makower, *op. cit.* 186 n. 7.

should for one year be taken into the hands of the King for the purposes of the war;[1] an attack renewed in the following year at Worcester. In the Parliament of 1410, the Speaker of which was Thomas Chaucer, the son, perhaps, of the poet, the Lollards were strongly represented. The knights of the shires, 'satellites of Pilate,' as Walsingham calls them, proposed that the King should seize the temporalities of the Church for the relief of taxation and the endowment of 'fifteen earls, fifteen hundred knights, six thousand two hundred squires, and one hundred hospitals,' each to be served by two secular priests, and endowed with one hundred marks per annum. 'And to bear these charges they alledged by the said bill that the temporalities being in the possession of spiritual men amounted to 320,000 marks by year.' A list followed of the various sees and districts, each of which possessed '20,000 marks.' 'They alledged by the said bill that over and above the said sum of 320,000 marks, diverse houses of religion in England possessed as many temporalities as might suffice to pay yearly 15,000 priests and clerks, every priest to be allowed for his stipend seven marks by year. To this bill none answer was made,' nor was any entry of it made upon the official

[1] Wals, ii. 265. Trans. in Capgrave, 287.

roll.[1] The scheme was absurd. "The Lords," as Bishop Stubbs points out, "did not wish for a multiplication of their rivals," while the House of Commons in those days of annual election was a shifty body, and blew alternately hot and cold. We see this when, on February 8, 'the Commons prayed for a return of a petition touching Lollardry which had been presented in their name, requesting that nothing might be enacted thereon.' This petition, perhaps the result of a snatch vote, was an attempt to obtain the relaxation of the law *De Heretico Comburendo.*

Some there were of the gentry whose sympathies were more than negative or political. In Leicestershire, Sir Thomas Latimer welcomed the preachers to his manor houses. In the west the missioners Hereford, Aston, and Purvey were allowed to preach in the churchyards, the knight of the parish sometimes standing by armed for greater security.[2] At the trial of Richard Wyche for heresy in December 1400 two knights in the audience could not suppress their verdict—'He seems to us to believe well.'[3]

[1] Earliest record is in Fabyan (d. 1512), *New Chron. England and France*, 575. Cf. Wals., ii. 282–3. The scheme was originally Purvey's (Foxe, iii. 290; *F.Z.*, 393).

[2] Wilkins, iii. 202. For Latimer's wealth, see *Inquis. Post Mort. Cal.*, iii. 275, 281.

[3] *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, v. 532.

In London especially the Lollards were both numerous and influential. In 1395 two members of the Privy Council, Sir Richard Story and Sir Lewis Clifford, aided by Sir Thomas Latimer and Lord John Montague of Shenley, who had plucked down all the images in his church,' nailed to the doors of St. Paul's and Westminster a paper setting forth the tenets of 'the evangelical doctor.' They also added a strong attack upon vows of celibacy, and two doctrines, in later days associated with the Quakers—the denunciation of all war 'without spiritual revelation' as 'expressly contrary to the New Testament,' and the proposal to destroy, for the increase of virtue, the abundance of unnecessary arts practised in our realm, goldsmiths, armourers,' and the like. This Puritan document, though in places unintelligible, is yet, on the whole, as we might expect from its authors, balanced and moderate. Richard, whose proud boast it was that 'he hung the heretics and laid their friends low,' and who atoned for nights spent in drinking and debauchery by his devotion to the Church, happened at that time to be in Ireland, floundering about in its bogs with a great army. He hurried back at once, vowing to hang all Lollards. Story was compelled to recant: 'If you ever break your oath,'

added the King, 'I will slay you by the foulest death that may be.' Clifford also and Latimer found it expedient to amend their ways, the former even laying charges against the Lollards (1402). So they died in peace, confessing themselves traitors to God, and desiring to be buried in 'the churchyard, as unworthy to be laid in the church.'[1] Montague perished in an abortive rising in favour of Richard II. He was beheaded by the mob at Cirencester (Jan. 8, 1400). According to the chroniclers, 'this friend of Lollards, the derider of images, the scoffer at sacraments, died miserably, refusing the sacrament.'[2]

The triumphs of the Lollards were greatest among the middle classes of the great towns and their surrounding districts—London, Leicester, Bristol, Northampton, and Norwich. In North-

[1] For this incident, see Trokelowe in *Chron. St. Albans.* (R.S., No. 28, vol. iii.), 174–83, 347; *F.Z.*, 360–9; Capgrave, *Chron.*, 245, 260; Wilkins, iii. 221.

For Clifford, see *supra*, p. 167. In 1394 he had joined De Mézière's new crusading Order of the Passion (Wylie, iv. 108, also App. BB. for this interesting order itself). Their memorial is translated in Gee and Hardy, 126-132. Its ideas concerning war are stated in a more moderate fashion by Purvey, *Rem.*, 34–35. See also *S.E.W.*, iii. 137–141 (iii. 147 shows that this is not by Wyclif).

[2] For other leading Lollards, see Lewis, 242 ff. Wylie, iii. 296.

ampton the mayor, John Fox, welcomed the "poor priests" to his own house, and allowed them to take forcible possession of the churches. In London, in 1387, when Walter Pattishull, an Austin friar, became a Wycliffite, and raised a riot against his order by posting on the door of St. Paul's charges of murder and other crimes, 'nearly a hundred of the Lollards' protected him, and would have set fire to the friary had not one of the sheriffs quieted the storm with gentle words.[1]

That Leicester, fourteen miles from Lutterworth, should have fallen under the influence of Wyclif is not strange. There the missionary of Lollardism was a priest named William Swinderby, who had previously gained some reputation as a hermit and a forceful preacher on the never-failing theme 'of the failings of women.' Now he discoursed 'Lollardy' in a mill. So great was his following that the priests found themselves powerless, and when, in July 1382, he was arrested and condemned at Lincoln, the mayor and citizens forwarded a petition on his behalf. Through the intercession of John of Gaunt and by recanting his doctrines, Swinderby obtained his release, but was soon at work again, preaching first at Coventry, a hotbed of dissent, and when driven thence, joining his friends in the

[1] Wals., ii. 157–9.

west, for his reputation at Leicester was gone. His special district was the forest-land west of the Malverns, 'a certain desert wood called Darval,' and the banks of the Wye. There John Trevenant, Bishop of Hereford, hunted for him in vain. But 'upon Friday, being the last of the month of June,' in the year 1391, 'about six of the clock, in the said parish church of Bodenham, did the said William Swinderby personally appear before us'—the Bishop,—'and read out word by word certain answers made, avouching them to be agreeable to the law of God. The which thing being done, the said William Swinderby did depart from our presence, because that we had promised to the same William free access,' the example of Constance that faith should not be kept with heretics not yet being furnished to the faithful. Of what afterwards became of him, says Foxe, 'there is no certain relation made.'

The early Lollards of the towns, like the Lollards of Oxford, failed at first from their unwillingness to become martyrs. In some respects the absence of the continental machinery for persecution was a misfortune for them. The Papal Inquisition had never succeeded in effecting a lodging in England (save for one short month, when it was imported by special Act of Parliament that it might crush the Templars),

while the methods of the Episcopal Inquisition were antiquated and slow.[1] In England also hitherto there had been no heresy. Even Wyclif himself had never heard of the Waldenses, and but few Englishmen were aware either of the existence of forms of dissent or of systematic persecution. With their usual conservatism, the English were slow to adopt either idea.

The notion that he was in revolt against the national Church was as intolerable to Wyclif as at one time it was to Wesley. His followers, likewise, upon whom, as upon most Englishmen, authority weighed heavily, when dragged before their bishops hesitated, from other motives than fear, to pronounce themselves Dissenters. So they went through a form of recantation, which probably to their minds represented their desire to be still one with the Church, and then, after due penance, commenced once more their efforts to reform the Church from within. Often also the form of recantation was so vague, as in the case of Walter Brute—'I, Walter Brute, submit myself principally to the evangely of Jesus Christ, and to the determination of holy Kirk, and to the general councils of holy Kirk,'[2]—that the

[1] For the distinction of the Inquisitions and the incident of the Templars, see *Church of West in M.A.*, ii. c. iv. sect. 4.

[2] Foxe, iii. 187.

words might mean one thing to the judges, another to the prisoner, or the first clause might be regarded as a saving clause. Nevertheless, with all allowance made, we must confess a certain absence of straightforwardness. The early Lollards were too prone to follow the advice which the subtle Purvey had given them:[1] 'When Antichrist or any of his shavelings doth ask of these that art a Christian, whether the Sacrament be the very body of Christ or not, affirm thou it manifestly so to be.' But straightforwardness was not a medieval characteristic, and the art of making black into white by rules of logic was nowhere more highly esteemed than in the Universities of Paris and Oxford.

The bishops, on the other hand, were glad to get rid by recantation and penance of prisoners whose prosecution was a great expense to them; with whom, too, if refractory, they scarcely knew what to do. Even William Smith, of Leicester, who had used an old image of St. Catherine 'that stood in the corner of a chapel, outside the Leicester leper house,' as firewood 'to cook his greens,'—'these images,' a Lollard had written, 'might warm a man's body in cold, if they were

[1] Foxe, iii. 287. For Purvey's own views, similar to Wyclif's, see *Rem.*, 40–3.

set upon a fire,'[1]—was merely forced to do penance.[2] 'Then upon the Saturday next ensuing,' wrote Courtenay, 'the said William [Smith], Roger [Dexter], and Alice [Dexter] shall in the full and public market stand in like manner in their shirts, without any more clothes upon their body, holding the aforesaid images in their right hands, which images three times they shall devoutly kiss.' For other offences, 'the said Alice' had also to 'walk in her chemise alone' to her parish church, devoutly kissing certain saints by the way (Nov. 17, 1389). Others, again, like the four tradesmen of Nottingham,[3] were dismissed on repeating an oath that henceforth they 'would worship images with praying and offering in the worship of the saints that they may be made after.' On the whole, the bishops were easy-going,—at anyrate without initiative. According to the bitter cry of Walsingham, Bp. Spenser, of Norwich (d. 1406), alone did his duty; 'may his name be blessed for ever, for he did not let his flock be infected with disease.' This 'fighting champion of the Church' 'swore

[1] *S.E.W.*, iii. 463, which is not by Wyclif, and should be dated 1388. Compare *An Apology for Lollard Doctrine*, 85-90. Wrongly attributed to Wyclif, ed. Todd, 1842.

[2] Knighton, ii. 182-4 and 313. For their penance, Wilkins, iii. 211 (Foxe, iii. 200).

[3] Wilkins, iii. 225.

that if any one of that perverse sect should presume to preach in his diocese, he should either be burnt or beheaded.'[1] His efforts, however, were vain, and in the next century we find that Norfolk, the richest and most populous county in England, the centre of our cloth trade, had become the headquarters of Lollardry.[2]

IV

With the accession of Henry IV. (Sept. 30, 1399) a new era begins. The adventurer could not afford to quarrel with the power which had set him on the throne, and which alone could shield him from the consequences of his murder of Richard 'the Redeless.' The son of John of Gaunt might perhaps have been expected to shelter the Lollards, but political considerations outweighed all others. He owed his crown to Archbp. Arundel; and Arundel had boasted to Thorpe that 'God hath called me, and brought me into this land to destroy the false sect, and, by God, I shall pursue you so narrowly that I shall not leave a slip of you.' So, on the

[1] Wals., ii. 189. Capgrave, *De Ill. Hen.*, 170-2, as a Norfolk man, wrote his biography.

[2] In estimating the Lollardry of the 15th century, the recent shifting of population must be borne in mind. In 1378 the population of Norfolk and Suffolk was 213,828, of London but 46,076 (Wylie, iii. 413 n.).

second day of his reign, Henry issued an injunction to all sheriffs and mayors, warning them against supporting 'certain evil-disposed preachers holding diverse nefarious opinions and detestable conclusions, repugnant to the canonical decisions and sanctions of Holy Mother Church and redounding to the offence and discredit of the order of Mendicant Friars' (Rymer, viii. 87).

When Convocation met at St. Paul's (Jan. 29, 1401), the King sent his commissioner to direct their attention to the danger from the Lollards, and to promise his co-operation in any steps taken to suppress them. Four heretics were at once examined, three of whom, Purvey, Becket, and Seynon, recanted. But the fourth, William Sawtre, 'otherwise called Chatris, parish priest of St. Osyth the Virgin,' Walbrook, was made of sterner stuff. To the test question: Is it real bread after consecration? he answered to the last: 'It ceaseth not to be very bread, but remains bread, holy, true, and the bread of life; and I believe the said sacrament to be the very body of Christ.' On other points he was equally firm. He would not 'worship the cross whereon Christ was crucified, but only the Christ that suffered upon the Cross'; nevertheless, if the said cross were actually before him, he 'would

worship the same as a sign token and memorial of the passion of Christ.' He would only accept the decisions of the Church 'when such determination was not contrary to the will of God' (Feb. 19). At the adjourned examination (Feb. 23) Spenser of Norwich brought forward evidence that he had held the same opinions when chaplain at Lynn, and had there recanted, 'upon the 25th of May 1399, in the churchyard of St. James's.' This was decisive; so (Sat., Feb. 26) Sawtre was solemnly degraded in St. Paul's, the paten and chalice taken from him, his vestments stripped off. The same day, 'Holy Mother Church having nothing further to do in the premises,' the King signed a writ 'to the mayor and sheriffs of London, enjoining them as straightly as we are able, according to law divine and human and the canonical institutes customary in that behalf, to commit to the fire the aforesaid William in any public and open place within the liberty of the city.' A week later (March 2) Sawtre was taken to Smithfield and fastened upright in a barrel heaped with faggots. There, in the sight of a vast crowd, he sealed his testimony with the flames. He was the first Englishman to choose rather the suffering of death than to trifle with his conscience.

Sawtre was burned neither by statute law nor by common law, but, as Henry's writ shows, under 'the canonical institutes'—*i.e.* under the canon law of Rome,—at that time, as Professor Maitland has shown, strictly binding on the English Church.[1] This, however, was felt to be a somewhat dangerous precedent; it might be extended to more troublesome matters than the burning of a Lollard. So a few days after Sawtre's death Parliament passed the Black Statute, *De Heretico Comburendo* (March 10, 1401); his death, in fact, had probably been held over for a week, while negotiations for the introduction of this Act were proceeding. By the new law unlicensed preaching was prohibited, as also 'the making or writing of any book contrary to the Catholic faith.' In the case of persons 'canonically convicted,' a bishop was given the power of imprisonment, 'according and as long as shall seem expedient to his discretion.' Relapsed heretics, and those refusing to abjure, were to be handed over to the sheriff or mayôr, who 'should cause them to be burnt before the people in a high place, that such punishment should strike fear to the minds of others.'

The statute was not allowed to remain a dead

[1] See Appendix V, for a discussion of this burning.

letter. John Badby, a tailor of Kemerton,[1] near Evesham, when tried before his bishop at Worcester (January 2, 1409), stoutly denied that 'Christ sitting at supper' could give His disciples His living body to eat'; while, even if transubstantiation were a fact, 'John Rakier, of Bristol—any man,' as he explained, 'of good life who loved God perfectly—had as much power to make the like body of Christ as any priest.' Badby was allowed the usual year's grace for reflection in prison, then brought up in London at the Blackfriars (March 1, 1410) before two archbishops, eight bishops, the Duke of York, the Chancellor of England, and other dignitaries. To all their arguments Badby would only answer that while life was in him he would not retract. 'If the host on the altar was the body of God, then are there twenty thousand gods in England, but he believed in one God omnipotent.'

At an adjourned Convocation in St. Paul's (March 5), Badby was condemned, and, that same afternoon, hurried off to Smithfield. There

[1] As an interesting chain, note: Wyclif's *De Ecclesia* was written out by a Czech scribe at Kemerton (*ib.* p. xi.). From Kemerton came Badby; also, from the district, 'nearly five thousand bowmen'!! to the support of Oldcastle 'when he lay near Malvern' (Wals., ii. 307).

Prince Henry, "the last king of chivalry," who loved a stout man, even though a heretic, besought him once more to recant. But he 'stood stiff to the truth of Christ'; so the faggots were lighted. 'But when the innocent soul felt the fire, he cried "mercy," calling belike upon the Lord, with which horrible cry the Prince, being moved, commanded them to take away the tun and quench the fire.' Badby was lifted from his barrel, while the Prince bent over him, and promised him life, pardon, and a maintenance of 'three pence a day'[1] if he would recant. 'But he would not cease of the stinking error he was in'; so they chained him again to the stake, and burnt him 'unto dry ashes.' Thus, adds the chronicler, 'Badby passed to the eternal fire.' More accurate is the judgment of a modern historian: "Henry v. could beat the French at Agincourt, but there was something here beyond his understanding and beyond his power,—something before which kings and bishops would one day learn to bow" (Trevelyan, *op. cit.* 335).

If his treatment of Badby, the heroic tailor and martyr of Kemerton, showed that Henry v. had

[1] *I.e.* the wages paid in harvest-time to reapers, at a time when such wages of peasants were really worth double what the peasant gets to-day (Rogers, *Work and Wages*, chap. viii.).

a heart of pity, the measures he took against the Lollards as soon as he ascended the throne showed that the new King—'a true lover of Holy Church'—was determined to crush heresy once for all. A proclamation was issued (Rymer, ix. 46) against all 'who, under the colour of preaching, should sow among our people the baneful seed of Lollardry,' while Convocation was encouraged to continue the proceedings it had commenced against the head of the sect, the famous Sir John Oldcastle.[1] This Herefordshire knight, who took his name from an old border castle at Almeley, near Kington, was born, according to a statement of Elmham, 'in the year of the Schism' (1378). If so—and other evidence would lead us to accept this date—his words at his trial: 'Before God and man I profess solemnly here that I never abstained from sin until I knew Wyclif, whom ye so much disdain,' must be interpreted to mean Wyclif's writings, and not, as by some historians, that he had been a personal friend of the Reformer.

In return for useful service against Owen Glendower and his Welsh freebooters, Oldcastle had been rewarded with a pension of '£40 a year' (1406) and other honours. In 1408 he married Joan, granddaughter and heiress of John,

[1] For sources of Oldcastle, see App. W.

Lord Cobham. He seems to have succeeded to the title, for in January 1410 we find him summoned to sit among the barons of England. A big strong fighter, a firm friend of the Prince of Wales, a scholar who in 1410 could write to his friends in Bohemia in Latin and quote from Augustine, Isidore, and Chrysostom, Oldcastle had already come under Lollard influence, and abandoned his former friends, indifferent to the scorn of the popular song—

> It is unkindly for a knight,
> That should a kingë's castle keep,
> To babble the Bible day and night
> In resting time when he should sleep;
> And carefully away to creep
> Fro' all the chief of chivalry.
> Well ought him to wail and weep,
> That such lust hath of lollardy.[1]

In the Parliament of 1410 Oldcastle had assisted in securing an amendment to the Statute of Heretics, whereby persons arrested should be imprisoned during their trial in the King's, and not the bishop's wards, 'in the same county where arrested.'[2] Now in his castle of Cooling, not far from the Medway, Oldcastle sheltered

[1] *Polem. Songs*, ii. 243–7. The whole poem should be read.

[2] *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 626. Wylie, iii. 309, seems to me to exaggerate the influence of Oldcastle in this Parliament. Cf. similar protest, *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 141.

Lollard preachers (Wilkins, iii. 338), and corresponded with King Wenzel of Bohemia, offering him his services, 'with all my friends adhering to me in the way of the true gospel.'[1] We hear also of letters that he had written to 'Master Hus, in my judgment a priest of Christ.'

The discovery in the shop of an illuminator 'of Pater Noster Row' of a book 'from Coventry, full of poison against the Church,' which Oldcastle acknowledged to be his, gave Arundel his opportunity. The Archbishop laid the matter before the King at Kennington. Henry, 'greatly shocked,' sent for his former friend. After a stormy interview at Windsor, the King instructed Arundel (August 1413) to proceed 'with all the speed he could.' As Oldcastle took no notice of the ecclesiastical citations, Henry was forced to arrest him under his royal warrant, and bring him before the Archbishop in the chapter-house of St. Paul's (September 23, 1413). There Oldcastle put in a written confession of faith in English on five cardinal points, to two of which only Arundel objected as 'not sufficiently catholic.' He believed that 'the most worshipful sacrament of the altar is Christ's body in form of bread.'

[1] For text of this letter, see Wylie, iv. 321, dated London, Sept. 7 (? 1413). For his other letters, see Wylie, iii. 462.

As for penance, all that he would allow was that 'it is needful for every man that shall be saved to forsake sin and do penance for sin before done with true confession, very contrition, and due satisfaction, as God's law teacheth.' On his being pressed to acknowledge that 'the material bread that was before is turned into Christ's very body, so that there remaineth on the altar no material bread nor material wine,' Oldcastle refused: 'It is both Christ's body and bread,' he said. Absolution he would seek from 'none but God.' Hereupon 'he kneeled down on the pavement and held up his hands and said: I shrive me to God and to you all, sirs, that in my youth I have sinned greatly and grievously . . . Good Lord, I cry Thee mercy!' Further argument followed, in the course of which Oldcastle denounced 'Rome as the very nest of Antichrist,' the prelates as his members, 'the friars as his tail,' and warned the bystanders against the 'seducers who lead you to hell.' 'Alack, sir, why do you say so?' interrupted the Prior of the Augustines; 'that is uncharitably spoken.' Arundel reluctantly delivered sentence (September 25). Oldcastle was pronounced 'a pernicious and detestable heretic'; but the King granted a respite of forty days in the hope that he would recant, and seems even to have

drafted a form of abjuration for the knight to sign.[1]

But before the tenth of October Oldcastle had escaped from the Tower. He lay concealed in the house of one William Fisher, a parchment maker of Smithfield, while the more desperate Lollards, whose numbers in the home counties seem to have been considerable,—'twenty thousand from different parts of England,'[2]—plotted to seize Henry at Eltham, under cover of a 'mumming' (January 6, 1414). The plot was easily defeated; the muster of conspirators at 'a field of St. Giles's,' near Holborn Bars, was dispersed with an ease which shows the absence of any real danger, and justifies to some extent the suspicion of Foxe that the whole plot was exaggerated, if not invented, by the Government. Seven-and-thirty heretics were sent to the gallows, seven being burnt, 'gallows and all,' while a proclamation was issued offering a thousand marks reward, or, in the case of a corporation, perpetual exemption from 'all forms

[1] So I understand the confession printed *F.Z.*, 414–6. Bale, followed by Milman and Ramsay, calls it a forgery of the bishops. These confessions are a source of much trouble. See similar cases, pp. 234 n. 1; 210 n. 1.

[2] *Rot. Parl.*, iv. 108. This exaggeration is still further exaggerated in the Chronicles. For the popular feeling in Kent, see Devon, *op. cit.* 353.

of taxes,' for the arrest of Oldcastle. But the 'lollardus lollardorum,' despite the vigilance of 'certain constables of Smithfield,' who tried to capture him by night, had already taken refuge in his own country round Malvern and the hills near Vyrnwy. In these fastnesses for a time he was secure, and seems to have engaged in plots with the Scotch and Welsh, even venturing out, so rumour had it, as far as St. Albans.

In the autumn of 1417 Oldcastle was captured by the lord of Powys after he had 'made great defence,' and was carried, 'sore wounded,' in a horse litter to London. On December 14 he was brought before a special meeting of Parliament. The same day, 'for there was no need of witnesses,' nor did he make any defence, he was dragged on a hurdle to the new Lollard gallows in the same field of St. Giles's, and there 'hanged by a chain of iron and burnt up, gallows and all.' Monkish chroniclers blackened his memory with lies, while playwrights turned his character into sport as "that villainous, abominable misleader of youth, that old white-bearded Satan" (1 *Henry IV.*, Act ii. sc. iv.), the companion of the Prince of Wales in follies, which, through Shakespeare and others, have taken a hold upon the popular

imagination beyond the power of sober historical evidence to destroy. But in the next century the Lollard chief was saluted by Bale and the Puritans as a 'blessed martyr of Christ, not canonised of the Pope, but in the precious blood of his Lord'; while popular sympathy forced Shakespeare, in the revised draft of his play, to substitute for the name of Oldcastle the name of Falstaff,[1] with the confession in the epilogue: "Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man." Thus, as Fuller justly remarks with a reference to the manner of his death, "His memory hath ever been in a strange suspense between malefactor and martyr."

V

The fall of Oldcastle drove Lollardry underground. Their suppression had ceased to be a mere matter for the Church; 'all mayors, bailiffs, and other officers' had been ordered by statute 'to root and destroy all heresies and errors commonly called lollardries.'[2] Henceforth they could reckon few priests among their number, fewer still of the gentry and educated classes. Even in the towns the middle classes

[1] See App. X, for Oldcastle and Falstaff.
[2] *Rot. Parl.*, iv. 24. Wilkins, iii. 358.

seem to have repented of their dalliance with heresy and to have returned to the faith; in part they were diverted by the foreign policy of Henry. The victory of Agincourt came to the rescue of the Church; to be a Lollard was to cease to be a patriot. More lasting as "a buttress for the tottering Church against the onslaught of free-thinking innovators" was the rapid rise at the close of the fourteenth century of the new guilds or religious associations.

Though originally started in imitation of the successful trade guilds of London and Bristol, the new guilds had no connection with trade. Their object was the furtherance of neighbourliness and mutual help. They combined the advantages of a social club with the benefits of insurance and assurance against fire, water, poverty, disease, and death. They provided dowers for portionless girls; they furnished school fees for promising lads; above all, they made the "Merry England" of our fathers by reason of their incessant 'mummings,' miracle-plays, mysteries, and the like.

From the first, whether by accident or design, the guilds were strictly associated with the Church. Each guild linked itself on to some special saint or chapel, whose feast-day they

kept with processions and banquets, and for whose services they provided candles and funds. The wealthier guilds even maintained chaplains of their own, at the cost of ten marks, to offer masses for the living and the dead. The popularity of these guilds, if we may judge from their number and rapid growth, was extraordinary. "In London there were at least ninety of them connected with parish churches. There were fifty-five at Lynn, where Sawtre had preached." Nor were they confined to the larger towns. There were eight such guilds in the little parish of Oxburgh in West Norfolk, and forty-two at Bodmin in Cornwall. In Coventry, Chesterfield, and Stratford the separate guilds combined to form a united guild, of which the outgoing mayor was the master, and the surrounding gentry were brethren. By the beginning of the fifteenth century there was scarcely a town of any importance without them. Great as is their interest to the student of social England, these clubs were of not less moment in its religious history. The guilds crushed out Lollardry as something alien to their spirit, impossible for their working. By a retribution, not without elements of misfortune, they were in their turn suppressed by the Reformation. But for the time being they

rescued the Church by restoring the towns to the faith.[1]

But, deserted by Oxford, despised by the rich and noble, persecuted unceasingly by Church and State, forsaken by the "Merry England" of the guilds and mysteries, Lollardry still survived, especially among the artisans of the towns and the larger villages of the eastern counties.[2] Some writers of repute have considered that the later Lollardry became rather a social revolt than a religious movement; that Lollardry, deprived of all intellectual ballast and social weight, drifted hither and thither, without pilot or rudder, its crew rather restless malcontents than true-hearted reformers—adventurers "who rejected as unworthy of the Christian religion whatever did not appear patent at once to the most ordinary intelligence, for whom human nature had no hidden depths, religion no mysteries." We see few reasons for indorsing this verdict of Shirley (*F.Z.*, lxvii.). If at times, as they read their jealously hoarded pages of the English Bible, they fell into extravagances of exegesis,

[1] Full details of the guilds will be found in Wylie, iii. c. 75, and the great work of Toulmin Smith, *English Guilds*. For the Lollard view, see Thorpe, *Eng. Garner*, vi. 83. *S.E.W.*, iii. 333.

[2] See lists: Rymer, ix. 120, 129, almost all craftsmen and lower clergy. So also a long list from the eastern counties in Foxe, iii. 588. Cf. also iii. 540, 598; vi. 174, 242.

if here and there obscure Lollards like John Seygno claimed that the eating of pork was a sin, while others combined the new doctrines with superstitious practices, "charms and adjurations made over willow wands," and the like, as in the case of John Boreham, parish priest of Salehurst, in the diocese of Chichester,[1] the fault must not be laid altogether at their door. They had become sheep without a shepherd, a sect without intellectual guidance. Their schools were broken up,[2] the works of their founder confiscated and burnt, their missionaries without training or culture. The marvel is rather that the fools among them were so few, while of fanaticism, save in certain matters of doctrine or ritual, we find hardly a trace.[3] "Lollardry," says Trevelyan, "had no connection with socialism, or even with social revolt. We possess reports of the proceedings against scores of Lollards, the items of indictment mount up to several

[1] Stephens, *Memorials Chichester*, 140–2.

[2] For the Lollard schools, see App. Y.

[3] The most serious charge against the Lollards is with reference to marriage. For instance, John Skilley, of Flixton (1430), miller, declared "that the sole consent of mutual love between man and woman suffices for matrimony, without any solemnisation in church." So William Coleyn, skinner. See Stevenson, *op. cit.* 151, 165. Foxe omits these articles. The reader should bear in mind that we have only the statements of adversaries, which may be unintentionally coloured.

hundreds, yet I have been able to find between the year 1382 and 1520 only one case of a Lollard accused of holding communistic theories, and not a single case of a Lollard charged with stirring up the peasantry to right their social wrongs."[1] To the same effect is the judgment of Ramsay: "Of any prior designs of a revolutionist or socialist character no evidence is forthcoming."[2] The idea of Hook and Wakeman that the Lollards were "the levellers of the Middle Ages, half fanatics, half communists," is, in our opinion, an unfortunate historical blunder.

The loss of Oxford and the driving of Lollardism underground speedily led to a considerable change in its doctrines. The rude common sense of the people, untrammelled by the logic of the schools, pushed Wyclif's arguments into conclusions which he himself had not reached, brushed aside his fine-spun distinctions, and spoke with scorn of ideas and rites that even the great iconoclast had treated with reverence. Wyclif had allowed

[1] Trevelyan, 340–1.

[2] Ramsay, i. 178, 181 n.; cf. Trevelyan, 370, and especially Purvey, *Rem.*, 104, 105. This against Hook, iv. 499, 511; v. 30 *passim*. Cf. Creighton, i. 352. For their revolt in 1431, see Ramsay, i. 436. The following references in the text are to Foxe. An accessible statement of Lollard doctrine shortly after Wyclif will be found in *S.E.W.*, iii. 454–496.

the use of images if they tended to devotion; 'Images,' said Purvey, 'may be worshipped in a manner, as for signs of saints, or as books of lewd men, or as a wife keepeth dearly the ring of her wedding' (*Rem.*, 24). But later Lollards poured ridicule on the local 'Maries,' 'the Witch of Lincoln,' the Virgin of Walsingham, and the rest—'carpenters' chips,' as they called them (iv. 239), the cult of which was so dear to the Catholic. 'Trees growing in a wood,' said Richard White, 'are of greater value than such dead things, for they have life, and as such bear a nearer resemblance to God.'[1] At Westcheam some Lollards cut down the crucifix, tied it to the tails of horses, and flung it into a sewer. In 1438 John Gardiner, 'when he should have been houseled, wiped his mouth with a foul cloth, and laid the host therein.' According to Walsingham, another ate the consecrated bread with onions and oysters for supper.[2] Foxe also tells us (iv. 229) of two priests who put a mouse into the pyx, along with the host, 'and the mouse did eat it. . . . One of the priests was burned for the same.' We hear also of one Henry Philip, who said

[1] Walden, iii. 940.

[2] Wals., i. 451. Gardiner was taken by the parson of St. Mary Axe and burnt, May 14 (Gregory, *Chron.*, 181).

that he must light a candle before his 'block Almighty,' he being at the time the keeper of the rood-loft at Wycombe.

Such insults to religion were rare; no Church should be judged by its fanatics, from whom, on the whole, Lollardism was remarkably free. Nevertheless these incidents mark the development of revolt. Again, Wyclif believed in Consubstantiation and the Real Presence. Purvey called the mass a 'human tradition, neither evangelical nor ordained by Christ'; while Walter Brute practically accepts what is known as the Zwinglian position—'If we believe that He did voluntarily shed His blood for our redemption, then do we drink His blood.' In Coventry, one of the strongholds of Lollardry, in 1404, when the host was being carried through the streets to the dying, 'for there was great pestilence in the town at that time, many of the people in the streets turned their backs and made no sign of reverence.' Wyclif had the usual medieval belief in the value of celibacy; though in this as in other matters he is not always consistent. His followers early maintained 'that it is lawful for priests to have wives' (iii. 590). How quickly the Lollards were drifting from Wyclif's position of protest within the Church to the

formation of a separate sect is evidenced also in the statement of Walsingham, that in 1392 certain Lollard priests in the diocese of Salisbury[1] began to ordain new priests, 'asserting that they could give as much power of binding and loosing as the Pope.'

If the reader could transport himself to one of the services held 'secretly in the night' in some humble cottage, when the Lollards gathered together in their twos and threes to hear the word of God in the English tongue and exhort each other unto steadfastness, he would, we think, if we read their records aright, almost imagine himself in one of the little village chapels of the Particular Baptists or other strict Dissenters. He would find the same views as to ecclesiastical architecture—'the followers of Jesus ought to worship their Lord in mean and simple houses, and not in great buildings';[2] the same protest against drawing people to church 'by curiosity of gay windows, and colours, and paintings and baboonery';[3] the same extreme belief in predestination—'I would rather,' said Sawtre, 'worship him

[1] Wals., ii. 188. Cf. Wilkins, iii. 404.

[2] Foxe, iii. 533. From a Lollard work called *The Lanthorn of Light*. Cf. Wilkins, iii. 373–4.

[3] Wyclif, viii. 181. Cf. *P. Plow. Crede*, 123.

whom I know to be predestinate than an angel of God' (iii. 223); the same emphasis 'that no day is to be kept holy, but only the Sunday' (iii. 584); the same protest against chants,—'for God is not delighted with singing of this sort';[1] 'God forbid' said Wyclif, 'that any Christian man understand that this here synsynge (incensing) and crying (intoning) that men use now be the best service of a priest; for Jesus Christ and His apostles used it not'; the same assertion 'that every layman may in every place preach and teach the gospel' (iii. 189, 286), for 'every good man, though he be unlearned, is a priest' (iii. 590). Said Purvey: 'As it were a great madness when my brother lieth in a deep ditch, and is in point of drenching (drowning), to suffer him to lie still and go to the bishop and ask him licence to draw out my brother, so it is over great folly when our Christian brethren lie in the deep ditch of horrible sin and in point of drenching into hell to suffer them to lie still therein, and run to a worldly bishop to ask him licence to save their souls by God's word.'[2]

[1] Knighton, ii. 262. *S.E.W.*, iii. 228, 203, 479–81 (not Wyclif's).

[2] *Rem.*, 100.

Nor would there be lacking the same stern and somewhat careless eschatology—'there is no purgatory, for every man immediately after death passeth either to heaven or hell' (iv. 134; iii. 597); the same unworkable theory that the value of the sacraments depends on the character of the priest, whether he be 'unfaithful of living, uncunning of God's law';[1] the same indifference to the human side of the God-Man,—'Christ is not to be worshipped as regards His manhood.'[2] The observer will note also like tendencies in their preaching, much lingering on the prophecies, much tendency to allegory. Said Brute: 'The corporal wars in the Old Testament are figures of the Christian wars against sin and the devil' (iii. 155); frequent searchings of the Apocalypse and Daniel; constant emphasis of voluntary offerings rather than endowment. He will hear also again and again of 'the great whore,' 'the number of the beast,' and of the 'thousand years' of the rule of Satan.

Or, again, he might fancy himself listening to

[1] Purvey, *Rem.*, 120–5, makes some very sound remarks on this idea; it 'brings the people into despair of sacraments, since it may not be known certainly what ministry is good.'

[2] Wilkins, iii. 406. Tailor certainly had not learnt this from Wyclif. See p. 218.

one of the early Friends, as he hears the Lollards protest against bells in churches as 'ordained to fill priests' purses' (iii. 590); that 'the often singing in the church is not founded on Scripture' (iii. 533), or maintain the literal observance of the Sermon on the Mount, including the wrongfulness of all oaths,[1] the non-resistance of evil, the unlawfulness of all war (iii. 155), and the sinfulness of a Christian man imprisoning another for debt (iii. 131.; cf. *S.E.W.*, iii. 154).

Or, again, he will wonder whether Luther has come before his time, as he hears Walter Brute dwell on the need of justification by faith; quoting even Luther's favourite text—'"The just man shall live by his faith," whereby it is manifest that by the faith which we have in Christ we are justified from sin, and so do live by Him who is the true bread and meat of the soul' (iii. 173).

Above all, he will notice how these humble sectaries cling to their precious fragments of Wyclif's or Purvey's English Bible, or pass from hand to hand Wyclif's *Wyckett*.[2] Very pathetic are the official documents in the *Bishops' Registers*

[1] Foxe, iii. 186, cf. iii. 590; Knighton, ii. 262.

[2] For early references to the *Wyckett*, see Foxe, iv. 207 (1518); also iv. 176, 207, 226, 235, 236, 240, 244. These prove that it is at least a fourteenth century production. See App. M.

in the pictures they give us of these humble Nonconformists saving their pence for years that they might buy a copy of the Gospels or Epistles. 'Ye heard before,' wrote Foxe (iii. 721), 'how Nicholas Belward bought a New Testament in those days for four marks and forty pence, whereas now the same price will serve forty persons with so many books.' Again and again, as in the noted case of Richard Hun (1514), we find the Lollards dragged before the judges for 'having in their keeping diverse works prohibited and damned by the law, as the Apocalypse in English, the Epistles and Gospels in English';[1] 'Also this deponent saith that the said Marjory [Baxter] desired her that she and Joan, her maid, should come secretly in the night to her chamber, and there she should hear her husband read the law of Christ unto her; also that the said Margery had talked with a woman named Joan West, and that the said woman is in a good way of salvation' (iii. 595). Nor should we forget Thomas Pope, who was accused (1518), 'that he would sit reading in his book to midnight many times' (iv. 226).

Strangely modern is the Lollard emphasis of

[1] Foxe, iv. 184. Hun died in the Lollards' Tower while under accusation. Foul play was suspected. See further App. P.

a new humanity. We see this in the protest of Purvey against all crusades: 'Certes, as long as heathen men will live peaceably with us Christians, and not war on us to destroy our Christendom, we have no authority of God to war against them'; and in his plea, rather, for foreign missions: 'A true successor of St. Peter should rather grant indulgences to suffer pains meekly, to convert heathen men' (*Rem.*, 64). Pilgrimages, if made at all, should be 'made only unto the poor'; 'it were better to deal money unto poor folk than to offer to the image of Christ.'[1] 'If ye desire,' said Margery Baxter, 'to see the true Cross of Christ, I will show it you at home in your own house. Then the said Margery, stretching out her arms abroad, said: This is the true Cross of Christ, . . . and therefore it is but vain to run to the church to worship dead crosses.'[2] Similar answers were given by Thorpe, Oldcastle, above all by the heroic John Edmunds. For the later Lollards, like John Ruskin, cared more for "preventing the sufferings of Christ's people" than for "picturing to themselves the bodily pain, long

[1] Foxe, iii. 597; iv. 133. Cf. Purvey, *Rem.*, 23, 25, 58, 66.

[2] What became of Margery Baxter is not known; the register of Bishop Alnwick, of Norwich, was incomplete even in Foxe's day (ii. 596).

since passed, of One Person."[1] Even their schemes of disendowment were not the bare, selfish, spoliations of Henry VIII. When, in 1430, 'Jack Sharp, of Wigemoresland' revived the scheme of 1410, he not only made provision for the poor, but proposed that a thousand priests be added to the parochial clergy.[2] But the new humanity was thrown away upon an age that could burn as a heretic and witch the loveliest type of womanhood that the world has ever known, save only the mother of our Lord, —the peerless Joan of Arc.

The Lollards have sometimes been charged with the irreverence that follows iconoclasm. Their protest against superstition was unceasing, and not always wise, but of irreverence we notice few traces. Reverence, we may remark, was not a characteristic of the age. In some respects reverence is almost a modern growth, and, as the traveller will have noticed, is often singularly lacking in superstitious countries. Irreverence is the last charge that can be brought against the

[1] Let the reader compare the famous passage of Ruskin, *Lectures on Art*, pp. 71–76, with Foxe, iii. 594; iii. 265; iv. 238; Bale, *op. cit.* p. 39; *S.E.W.*, iii. 463,—and he will see a remarkable anticipation by the Lollards.

[2] Amundesham, i. 453–6 (In *Rolls* 28, vols. viii. and ix.). Sharp was hanged, drawed, and quartered at Oxford, and his head set on London Bridge (May 19, 1430), Gregory, *Chron.*, 171.

Lollards by a century which turned the inside of 'Poules' and Westminster Abbey into common markets, a legal exchange, and places of assignation, and which had a regular fair on high festivals in York Minster and Exeter Cathedral.[1]

Even if the Lollards had drifted into the extremes sometimes charged against them, they would yet be entitled to our respect by their courage and faithfulness. They deserve at the hands of the historian the same magnanimous treatment as the beaten general in whom the Roman Senate passed a vote of confidence because he had not despaired of the Republic. When we read of bakers and skinners[2] who endured 'the burning death' rather than assent to Transubstantiation or other speculations, we realise that life is altogether richer, that bravery, hitherto deemed confined to Agincourt and Crecy, to men of gentle blood, has become moral rather than physical, no longer a product of class conditions. No age can afford to forget the memory of its heroes, the men who died for their convictions. The number of

[1] See an exhaustive list of references on this matter, Wyllie, ii. 184, 185; iii. 210; cf. the indecencies, etc., of the mysteries, iii. 228. Cf. Jusserand, *Wayfaring Life*, 382.

[2] *E.g.* John Claydon, London, 1415. Richard Turning, 1415. Gregory, *Chron.*, 108. Wilkins, iii. 371–5. Foxe, iii. 534.

such martyrs among the later Lollards was by no means few. All through the fifteenth century, and even up to the dawn of the Reformation itself, we read of brave men and women who were faithful unto death,—priests like William Taylor[1] (1423), Richard Wyche[2] 'of the diocese of Worcester' (August 1439), William White[3] (Sept. 11th, 1428), who had even dared to marry a wife; simple countrymen like William Barlow, of Walden, William Bates, tailor, of Sething (Aug. 1430), or John Finch, tiler, of Colchester, whom we see led into court in their chains; woolpackers like Richard Hunden, 'damned as a false heretic' and 'burnt on the Tower Hill' (Jan. 20, 1430), whose crime, says the chronicler, was 'that he was of so large conscience that he would eat flesh on Fridays.'[4] Amid all the horrors of the Wars of the Roses, when all that was noble in English life seemed overwhelmed in a deluge of selfishness and blood, a few there were of larger mind, heroes of whom history but rarely makes mention. Such a Valiant-for-truth was John Goose (Aug. 1473), 'who,

[1] *F.Z.* 412–3; Foxe, iii. 581; Wilkins, iii. 404–13; Gregory, 149.
[2] For the story of Wyche, see App. Z.
[3] *F.Z.*, 417–32. Foxe, iii. 590–1. Burnt at Norwich.
[4] *Chron. London*, ed. Nicholas, 1827, 118; cf. Foxe, iii. 598.

being delivered to be burnt in the afternoon, desired of the sheriff to give him some meat, whereof he took and did eat as if he had been towards no manner of danger, and said to such as stood about him, "I eat now a good and competent dinner, for I shall pass a little sharp shower ere I go to supper." And when he had dined, he gave thanks, and required that he might shortly be led to the place where he should yield up his spirit unto God.' So he passed over, carrying his marks and scars with him, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side. Truly, as Ramsay remarks, "the heart of old England was not dead, though it seemed to slumber."[1] Such men as these were the ten righteous for whose sake the Sodom of Richard III. and Edward IV. was preserved.

When Luther's clarion call rang through Europe, Lollard congregations were still existing all over the home and eastern counties, and their influence was one of the forces which contributed to the triumph of the Reformation in England. We read of societies in Buckinghamshire and Berkshire which had maintained a continuous secret existence for over half a century. Nor was the growth of the Lollards due to any

[1] Ramsay, ii. 455. Foxe, iii. 755, taken verbatim from Fabyan's Chronicle (ed. Ellis, 1811), 663.

lack of persecuting zeal. Fitzjames, Bishop of London, imprisoned them by scores, compelled them to recant, and burnt the obstinate. So common were these fires that Ammonius, the Latin secretary of Henry VIII., writing to Erasmus from London a few weeks after the burning of William Sweeting and John Brewster (Oct. 18, 1511), could jestingly say that 'he does not wonder that wood is so scarce and dear; the heretics cause so many holocausts: and yet their numbers grow,—nay, even the brother of Thomas, my servant, dolt as he is, has himself founded a sect, and has his disciples.'[1]

So serious was the outlook that in Feb. 1512 a Convocation was specially summoned in St. Paul's 'for the extirpation of the heresies and schisms which in these days increase beyond wont.' The Convocation was memorable for two things. The proceedings were opened with a sermon by Dr. Colet, whom the Lollards, as we learn from Foxe, were accustomed to advise each other to hear, and between whose sermons and the increase of heresy the blindly orthodox, led on by Fitzjames, were wont to trace a connection. The Dean was not accustomed to mince his words even when addressing both Houses of Convocation. 'We are troubled,' he said, 'in these days

[1] Erasmus, Ep. cxxvii. (Leyden ed., 1702).

also by heretics, men mad with strange folly. But this heresy of theirs is not so pestilential and pernicious to us and the people as the vicious and depraved lives of the clergy!' But to reform their own lives was the last thing that the clergy intended. They preferred to 'extirpate heresy' by measures less inconvenient to themselves. In the course of the debate the advocates of severity were asked to point out, if they could, a passage in the Scriptures commanding the capital punishment of heretics. Whereupon 'a certain old divine' rose from his seat and thundered out the command of St. Paul to Titus: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." The word for "reject" in the Vulgate is *devita*, a rare but classical word signifying *to go out of the way* (*via*). '*De-vita, de-vita,*' thundered the doctor, 'with much temper,' as he proceeded to explain that '*devita,*' being derived from '*de vita tollere,*' was a sufficient Scriptural command for the punishment of heretics by death! The members of Convocation, it is said, were carried away by his learning.[1]

But the special Convocations and renewed

[1] For Colet's sermon, which should be read in full, and this incident, see Seebohm, *Oxford Reformers*, c. vii. The story was told Erasmus by Colet himself; see *op. cit.* 248 n. 2.

persecutions alike proved useless. The Lollards still increased. A preacher of Amersham, called Thomas Man, "before going to the stake in 1518 told his judges that he believed he had converted seven hundred persons in the course of his life." At Newbury in 1520 there was 'a secret society of faithful followers, to the number of six or seven score, who had continued together the space of fifteen years.' Wrote Tunstall to Erasmus, speaking of the influence of Luther upon England in the year 1523: 'It is no question of some pernicious novelty; it is only that new arms are being added to the great band of Wycliffite heretics.' To the same effect is the testimony of Erasmus. Writing that same year to Pope Adrian VI. to urge on the new Pope the uselessness of persecution, he pleads the instance of the Lollards. 'Wyclif and his followers were put down by the English kings; but they were only crushed, not extinguished.'[1] English kings, in fact, were now glad of his aid. In 1530, according to Wood, Henry VIII. sent to Oxford for a copy of Wyclif's "Articles," and,

[1] Ep. 649. Abridged in Froude's *Erasmus*, 318. Cf. comment of Foxe, iii. 589. For the continued influence of Wyclif even at Oxford, see the striking instance given by Rashdall, *Univs.*, ii. 542 n. 2 (anno 1491). See also the opinion of Stevenson, *op. cit.* 187–8.

"after due consideration of the said articles, found that the Pope's power was not found, nor founded on God's word."

The revolution which Wyclif had heralded had come at last, and was carried out, for good or ill, much on the Erastian lines which he had proposed. The Lollards, in fact, had fulfilled the saying 'read in the prophecies among the Lollards,' to which 'William [Wright] deposeth; that the sect of the Lollards shall be in a manner destroyed; notwithstanding at length the Lollards shall prevail and have the victory against their enemies' (iii. 597). Wyclif, it is true, was no more the author of the Reformation than the Morning Star is the cause of day. Nevertheless the judgment of Fuller on the Lollards is correct: 'These men were sentinels against an army of enemies till God sent Luther to relieve them.' The "relief" had come. The weary years of waiting were accomplished; the Lollards should now receive at the Lord's hand double for all their sorrow. By their continuity of dissent they had linked on the older protest of Wyclif with the greater movement of the sixteenth century; they had familiarised the conservative English mind with the idea of revolt from medieval dogmas and institutions; they had exalted the idea and value of the laity; they

had proclaimed the emancipation of religion from the grip of the priest; they had demanded "the liberty of prophesying" and the right of individual judgment; above all, they had taught men how to die for their faith and conscience, and to prize beyond life itself the right of reading, without bishop's let or licence, the English Scriptures.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A, p. 24.

The Corruption of Avignon.

Alvaro Pelayo, *De Planctu Ecclesiæ.* I have used the Venice edition, 1560, and noted the following as of chief moment on this matter: ii. cc. vii., viii., xxviii., xlviii., and xlxix. The work is a very difficult one to read.

Students of the degeneracy of the fourteenth century will find Brown's *Fasciculus rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum* a storehouse of such information. This indispensable work was originally published by a reforming catholic, Ortiun Gratius, of Cologne, in 1535, and revised, with additions, in the interests of Protestantism by Edward Brown, London, 1690. I transcribe from my notebook the following references on this unsavoury theme :—Matthew of Krokow : *De Squaloribus Rom. Curiæ* (*op. cit.* ii. 584–607) ; *Aureum Speculum Papæ* (1404) *ib.* ii. 63, 70, 81, 101 ; Nicholas de Clemangis *De Ruina Ecclesiæ* (1401), Leyden, 1613, cc. xix.–xxxvi. (see Neander, ix. 81-101). To these I shall return when dealing with the Schism. More strictly for Avignon is the oft-quoted Petrarch, *Lib. sine titulo Epist.* vii., viii., ix., xii., xvi., ed. Lyons 1601. For England the best description of the period is in *Piers Plowman*, ed. Skeats E.E T.S. The gayer sides in Chaucer are familiar to all ; and Jusserand's *Eng. Wayfaring Life in the XIV. Cent.* is both fascinating and valuable.

APPENDIX B, p. 87.

William of Ockham.

Little, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vi. 747, shows that William of Ockham was not the Provincial of England at the famous assembly of Franciscans at Perugia in 1322, but a certain William of Nottingham. But Ockham was there. The dates of his works are somewhat doubtful. The *Octo Quæstiones*, "A.C. 1326, al. 1336, quod virius puto" (Goldast, ii. 313), *Dialogus*, 1343. *Opus 90 Dierum* in 1330. A critical catalogue of his works will be found, Little, *Grey Friars*, 225–34. The *Dialogus* is buried in 560 pages of Goldast's folio.

APPENDIX C, p. 108.

The Birthplace of Wyclif.

For the early life of Wyclif, birthplace, family, manor, etc., see Sergeant, c. 5, who examines at length the claims of Speswell (Stow's transcript of Leland, *Itin.*, v. 99. Accepted by Lechler. But see Poole, *Med. Thought*, 285), or Ipreswell (now Hipswell).

For an early date of birth, note Wyclif speaks of himself, perhaps rhetorically, in 1382 as an old man '*in fine vitae.*' For the late date that he did not take his doctor's degree until 1372. Cf. *F.Z.* xi. n. 1.

APPENDIX D, p. 109.

On the Three Wyclifs.

I confess that "the three Wyclifs" is perilously like Wendell Holmes and his "young fellow John."

The evidence is as follows:—

(*a*) *The Fellow of Merton.*—In a catalogue of fellows of Merton made in 1395 by Thomas Robert, his name occurs with the remark added: 'Doctor in Theologia qui cum nimium in proprio ingenio confidebat,' etc.; and the date added: 'a° xxx.

Edw. Ter.' (*i.e.* 1356) (Brodrick, *Memorials Merton*, 1885, p. 215). But if so, we are left to explain how Wyclif came to leave Merton, where each fellow received '50 shillings a year,' for Balliol, where they were only allowed '8d. a week.' There is further the great difficulty of John Wyclif being a Northern man. Fellows of Merton were by preference from the diocese of Winchester, or from other southern counties. In 1334 Merton refused to elect a Northern scholar, and in 1349 took an active part in a riot against the Northern Nation, driving out the Northern proctor, and forcibly procuring the election of Wylliott to the chancellorship. That a John Wyclif or Whitclif of Mayfield existed is not disputed. He was appointed by Islip vicar of Mayfield in 1361, and died in 1383 rector of Horsted Keynes and prebendary of Chichester (Courthope, *Gent. Mag.*, 1844, ii. 146, 147).

In favour of the Reformer being the fellow of Merton, the testimony of A. Wood is often adduced. But Wood speaks of him as a steward of the fellows' table, and tells us that he "was never a master fellow, but left the college, because it was weary of him, being a man of turbulent spirit." Wood therefore contradicts Robert. His account, leaving out the animus, is more probable. For the 'portionists' of Merton, now corrupted into postmasters (*post-magistri*), "though possibly not junior to the younger fellows, were a distinctly inferior and poorer class, who had no share, and had no prospect of rising to a share, in the government of the house" (Rashdall, *Univs.*, ii. 488), and who might therefore be glad to go to Balliol. But the objection that John Wyclif was a 'Borealis' still remains.

(*b*) *The Master of Balliol.*—That the Reformer was the master of Balliol is not disputed. When he obtained this position is not known. But 'on Monday next, after the feast of our Lord's Ascension' (1360), 'John de Wyclif, master of the house of the scholars of the hall called "Le Balliol hall" in Oxford, was attached to make answer to Nicholas Marchaunt in a plea of distresses taken.' Wyclif had seized, as Master, the property of one Nicholas in 'Cat Street' (Cateaton Street, now

Gresham Street, E.C.), the property of 'the wife of Isaac of Southwark, a Jewess.' Wyclif gained his suit (Riley, *Historical MSS. Commission*, 1874, p. 448). Wyclif therefore must have been elected before April 1360 in succession to William of Kingston. For the documents whereby 'J. de Wyclif, Magister sive Custos Collegii Aulae de Balliolo suburbio Oxoniae super Caudych,' is appointed by the college their proctor in the matter of the appropriation of Alboldesley (now corrupted to Abbotsley), April 7, 1361, also April 9; also for the later attestation, setting forth that he has taken possession of the Church and received oblations and 'young pigeons' from the parishioners, see *ibid.* 447-8.

We note here that Lechler 99 is scarcely correct. Balliol was originally a hall of students of the Paris type, originally 'artists' presided over by a principal elected by themselves. Before 1340 (not 1360 as Lechler) all artists had to leave on taking their degree, Rashdall, ii. 472-6. But in that year Sir Philip Somerville established six fellowships for theological students, and in 1364 the original sixteen fellowships were also made available for those artists proceeding to theology. We note also that the endowments of Balliol largely consisted of the houses of expelled Jews (1291 gift by Edward I., see *Collectanea*, ii. 277-316, Jews in Oxford, espec. p. 312). To add to the unsolved complications of Wyclif's life we note that Balliol was from the first intimately connected with the Friars. When, in 1282, Devorguila, the widow of John de Balliol, placed his foundation (1261, *Chron. Maj.*, v. 528) on a securer footing she acted under 'the advice of Friar Richard de Slikeburne.' One of the permanent visitors of Balliol, who alone could expel, was always a Franciscan. (Little *Grey Friars*, 9-10).

(c) *The 'almonry boy' of Queens.*—For this John Wyclif and his curious accounts at Queen's from 1363 onwards—in 1371 'for a Latin grammar, 8d.; for making a gown, 8d.'; 'for a knife, 3d.,' etc.—see Riley, *Historical MSS. Commission*, 2nd Report, pp. 141-2. The rents of this John Wyclif got sadly in arrears.

APPENDIX E, p. 111.

The Warden of Canterbury.

The identification of the warden of Canterbury with the Reformer is accepted by Lewis, Vaughan, Milman, Lechler, Poole, Matthew, and Brodrick. See Preb. Wilkinson in *Ch. Quart. Rev.*, Oct. 1877, for the best statement of arguments in favour.

The chief arguments in favour are the statements of Woodford, *Seventy-two Questions* (1381) (quoted in *F.Z.*, 517), *Chron. Ang.*, 115. (Against these, the fact that both writers impute dishonourable motives, and that Thomas Netter is silent on the matter in both his works.)

Rejected first by Courthope (*Gentleman's Mag.*, Aug. 1841; substance in Vaughan, 547), followed by Shirley (*F.Z.*, 513–518), Burrows, Rashdall. (*Univs.*, ii. 498 n.)

The chief arguments against are—(i.) the admitted connection of Mayfield with Archb. Islip; (ii.) the utter impersonalness, as it seems to me, of the reference to the matter by Wyclif himself. (*De Ecclesia*, 371). (Lechler's inference from this passage (p. 108) is well criticised in Poole, *Med. Thought*, 288 n.); (iii.) Islip was a Merton man, and founded Canterbury Hall on Merton lines. The books of the library, for instance, were not to be loaned except to Merton men. (Brodrick: *Memorials Merton*, 199.) He would, therefore, probably choose the Wyclif or Whitclif of Merton (see App. D), whom I take to be the Whitclif of Mayfield.

The documents connected with this hall, including the papal decision, are conveniently printed in Vaughan, 549–59. See also Wood, Oxford ii. 275–89, who adds that Wyclif "was so much stirred up to anger that afterwards he raised commotion in the church," etc. (p. 284).

APPENDIX F, p. 113.

On the Chronology of the Life of Wyclif.

The above chronology differs considerably from that of Lechler and the older historians. The new data are the date

of his degree in theology (1372)—justifying the happy conjecture of Bale—and acceptance of the canonry of Lincoln (1373) (*Cal. Pap. Letters*, iv. 193; *Eng. H. Rev.*, July 1900), and Loserth's demonstration (*Eng. H. Rev.*, Ap. 1896; cf. *Eulog. Contin.*, iii., 337-9) that the 'certain council' (see later), is not, as is invariably assumed, the Parliament of 1365, but that of 1374. The later date makes Wyclif's life a unity, the only difficulty being the extraordinary amount of work he must have compressed into ten years. But none of his theological writings are now dated earlier than 1375. For the later date, see also *Chron. Ang.*, 395: Circa istud tempus (1377) surrexit in Univ. Ox. quidam magister John Wyclif. It is scarcely needful to remind the student that *The Last Age of the Church*—a wild echo of Joachim's *Eternal Gospel* (see p. 93)—is no work of Wyclif, though "assigned to him in common with half the English tracts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in the absence of all external, and in defiance of all internal, evidence" (Shirley, *F.Z.*, xiii.). This work misled Bale, Lewis, Vaughan (64, 87, who, however, elsewhere is of two minds), Alzog, and perplexed Milman. It has been printed by Todd (Dublin, 1840).

This curious production (the shortness of which will not compensate the reader) mixes up references to Bede, John of Salisbury, with quotations from Joachim, 'Sibille,' 'Merlyn Ambrose.' The date usually assigned to it (1356) seems to me too early. Note the statement 'that commonly all children born since the first pestilence (*i.e.*, the Black Death) want eight great teeth' (p. xxxii.); an absurd hearsay which would seem to indicate a much later date. Cf. Todd's note, p. lxxxi.

APPENDIX G, p. 117.

The Morals of the University.

If the Inquisitors had inquired into the morals of the University they would have had their work cut out. See Rashdall, *Univs.*, ii. 687 ff., and especially the awful *locus*

classicus from Jacques de Vitry (ii. 690). It may be objected that things had improved since the days of de Vitry (1240) (*Ch. West.*, ii. 207), and that he was speaking of Paris. But see Roger Bacon, *Op. Ined.*, ed. Brewer, 412. To this add the *Prolegomena* to Purvey's Bible (*F. and M.*, i. 51); also Wyclif, Matt., 156, *et passim.*

APPENDIX H, p. 122.

The Numbers at Oxford.

For the numbers at Oxford—a matter of much importance in estimating the social history of England—see Rashdall, ii. c. 13; Wyclif, *De Eccl.*, 374; Gascoigne, *Loci*, ed. Rogers, 205; Walsingham, *Hypodig*, 514; Rogers, *Oxford City Documents*, 7; Wylie, iii. 413 ff.; Wood, i. 217, shows that in 1438 they were reduced to one thousand.

As a means of testing, take, *inter similia*, the following:—The male population of Oxford (*i.e.* "town," over fifteen) in 1380 was 2035. The population of London in 1348 was but 45,000. As a specimen of the untrustworthiness of all medieval figures, even by officials who should know, take the estimate presented to the Parliament of 1371, of the number of parishes in England. They were returned as 40,000. Parliament found that the actual number (Chester excluded) was 8600. (Stubbs, ii. 443.)

APPENDIX J, p. 152.

Minor Works on Wyclif.

Buddensieg, *J. Wyclif, Patriot and Reformer* (1884), a slight centenary work "designed for wide circulation and popular use," with short extracts from his sermons, etc.

Loserth, *Wiclif and Hus* (trans. Evans, 1884), a work which has settled once for all the relation of the two reformers. Of vital importance for a right estimate of Hus. A similar remark may be made on the great work of

Palacky, *Documenta Mag. J. Hus vitam, etc., Illustrantia*, Prague, 1869.

SHIRLEY, *Catalogue of Original Works of Wyclif*, 1865, is for use only by experts. Gives the authorities for genuineness. Has been largely superseded by more recent works. For a series of views in literature on Wyclif, see MOULTON, *Library of Literary Criticism* (a new work).

BURROWS, *Wiclif's Place in History*, 1882. Lecture I. is a readable survey of Wyclif literature and history previous to 1882. The rest is of no special value, or rather is superseded for the history of printed Wyclif works up to 1884 by BUDDENSIEG, *Polem. Works*, ii. p. i.-vi.

In the bibliography of Wyclif some mention should be made of *The Pretended Reformers*. "By Matthias Earbery, Presbyter of the Church of England, 1717," a scurrilous work (see especially pp. vii., xi., xxxiii., xxxv.), translated from the French VARILLAS. Its importance lies in its leading LEWIS to write his great work as an answer (1720), as his preface shows.

As the merely controversial aspects of the subject lie outside my purpose I have not quoted WOODFORD'S *Tractate against the Errors of Wyclif in the Trialogus*, written at the bidding of Arundel in 1397 (In BROWN'S *Fasciculus rerum Fugiendarum, etc.*, 1690, vol. i. pp. 190–265), nor THOMAS WALDEN'S *Doctrinale Antiquitatum Fidei Ecclesiæ Catholicæ*, about 1427 (ed. Venice, 1571). Both were fair-minded opponents, and historically are sometimes useful.

APPENDIX K, p. 159.

PECULIARIS REGIS CLERICUS TALIS QUALIS AND THE PLACE OF THE CLERGY IN PARLIAMENT.

Peculiaris regis clericus talis qualis cannot very well mean "a royal chaplain." For the date 1374 and not 1365 this title is part of the evidence. Lechler's idea (130–34) that Wyclif was a M.P. with a seat and a vote must be rejected, as also the notion of Shirley (*F.Z.*, xix.) that we have here "the earliest instance of the report of a parliamentary debate." Let the student read the seven speeches for himself, and he will marvel at the idea that

the House of Lords in the fourteenth century was an assembly of scholastic philosophers. Lechler, 151–55 is pure conjecture, also against all probability. The relations of the clergy to Parliament are somewhat complicated, and their discussion would take us too far afield. From 1283 onwards Convocation had included two proctors from each diocese to represent the inferior clergy. In 1295 Edward I. had summoned these clergy-representatives to Parliament, but all his efforts to induce the lower clergy to take a real part in Parliament were met by stubborn and successful resistance, and were not repeated after 1314. See Makower, 203–6, especially n. 23; also Stubbs, ii. 96, 130, 210, 427, 629. Stubbs, however, inclines to the view that Haxey (1397), "a canon of Lincoln, Lichfield, Howden, Southwell, and afterwards of York, Ripon, and Salisbury," was really a member of Parliament. But if so he was probably proctor for the Earl of Nottingham (Stubbs ii., 516, 624). For writ *præmunientes* summoning clergy to Parliament see Gee and Hardy, 85.

APPENDIX L, p. 178.

Wyclif's Views of the Church.

Wyclif's final views on the Church are best found in his short treatise *The Church and her Members* (1384), *S.E.W.*, iii. 338–365. His early views are expounded at great length in the (Latin) *De Ecclesia* (1378), a patchwork treatise that reads like a series of university 'determinations.' This was afterwards supplemented by his exceedingly bitter and extravagant *De Blasphemia* (1381). Other sources might be quoted (especially in *Polem. Works*, i. and ii. *passim*), but add little. Note, however, Matt., 467; *S.E.W.*, iii. 130–1, 184, 447; *Polem. Works*, i. 241–90, and for Wyclif's views on Predestination add *Trial*, 121–3.

APPENDIX M, p. 186.

Wyclif's Views on the Eucharist.

I have not troubled the reader with the references to Wyclif's works on which I have founded the above study

of his views. Wyclif's earlier views are best summed up in *F.Z.*, 104–109, 115–132. This last is of special importance, and should be studied by all. His later and larger Latin works add little but expansion and repetition to the above, and may be neglected save by the specialist. But the reader should not neglect Loserth's Introduction to the *De Eucharistia* or Dziewicki's Introduction *De Apostasia*. (Of the body of the *De Apostasia*, cc. xv. and xvi. are the most valuable. Of the *De Euch.*, pp. 15, 16, 18, 53, 83, 84, 85, 90, 93, 99, 111, 113, 123.) Cf. also Dziewicki's Introduction, *De Simonia*, xvi–xxi. His views in English are best summed up in *S.E.W.*, iii. 426, 502, 403–410. This last is practically identical with the disputed *Wycket*, a little work, first printed at Nuremberg (1546), which I have not quoted, as the authenticity is doubtful. Cf. also pp. viii. xix., with *Trial.*, 251. See note, p. 279.

The difficulty in the way of extracting a consistent account of Wyclif's views is very great, if not insuperable. His teaching, in fact, was still developing when death overtook him. Cf. his suggestion (*Trialogus* 280) that under certain circumstances the Eucharist might be consecrated by laymen, a view directly contrary to the earlier *De Euch.*, 99, *De Eccles.*, 458. Cf. his earlier view, *De Eccles.*, 448, 'that the foreknown, even when in actual sin, can minister the sacrament with profit to the faithful,' with his later subjective idea, that it depended on the priest being 'consecrated of God.' (*S.E.W.*, iii. 426, with iii. 227.)

For other passages of Wyclif dealing with the Eucharist, see Matt. 465; *S.E.W.*, ii. 358, 386, 404; iii. 484, 500; *De Blas.*, 26–30, 287; *Trial.*, iv. 247–255 on the meaning of signs.

For the relation of Wyclif's doctrines of space and time to his doctrine of Transubstantiation, see Dziewicki *De Logica*, iii. Introd. vii.–viii. Dziewicki maintains, *De Simonia*, xxv., that Wyclif never made a deep study of St. Thomas, from whom, at anyrate until very late in life, he did not profoundly differ.

The withholding of the cup from the laity, which played so important a part in Bohemia, did not trouble Wyclif. Though

widely practised it was not an authoritative custom of the Church, but was left to individual decision. See the exhaustive note of Lea, *Inquis.*, ii. 472–4, on the history of the custom.

APPENDIX N, p. 193.

Wyclif on the Authority of Scripture.

For Wyclif's views on the authority of Scripture, see *De Euchar.*, 116; *S.E.W.*, i. 225; iii. 362; ii. 343; 240 *Lat. Serm.*, i. 83; Matt., 284–5, 255–62; also 2, 33, 70, 266, 89, 94. *Op. Evang. passim, e.g.* i. 79, 368. (This treatise, never completed, was the one from which Huss prepared the great oration he intended to deliver at Constance. Its theme is the ample sufficiency of 'God's law.') For the views of Hereford and Purvey, *F.Z.*, 304, 397, and for other Lollard views, *S.E.W.*, iii. 495. Later Lollards probably went further than Wyclif, though *Trial.*, 64, goes far enough. The main argument of Pecock's *Repressor* was directed against certain rather clumsy statements in this matter of the later Lollards.

APPENDIX O, p. 197.

Certain Glosses of Lyndwood.

As Lyndwood's *Provinciale* is a difficult book for the young student to read, even if he be fortunate enough to find a copy in his library—there is none in Birmingham—I have abstracted the following most important glosses (*Provinciale*, ed. 1679).

(*a*) *Libri.* Sc. de novo compilandi. Secus si hoc fiat per modum sermonis publici, exponendo textum in lingua vulgari. Et quod dicit *per viam Libri* intelligere potes sic, videlicet, ut inde conficiat Librum continentem tota Biblia. Appellatione namque Libri simpliciter sumpti continetur Liber completus et integer, et non secundum numerales partes, prout saepius unum volumen dividitur in plures Libros, ut patet in Bibliis . . . ut scil. unum Librum particularem textus Bibliorum transferat. Nam

talis particularis translatio poterit dici Libellus ut sequitur.

Aut tractatus. Sic videlicet, quod de dictis doctorum, vel propriis, aliquem tractatum componat applicando textum sacræ Scripturæ, et illius sensum transferendo in Anglicum vel aliud idioma. Et eodem modo potest intelligi, quod dicit de Libro sive Libello, ut scil. textum sacræ Scripturæ in tali Libro vel Libello applicet, et textum ipsum transferat in aliud idioma (p. 286).

(*b*) *Noviter.* Et ex hoc quod dicit *noviter compositus*, apparet, quod Libros, Libellos vel Tractatus in Anglicis, vel alio idiomate prius translatos de textu Scripturæ legere non est prohibitum. (*Ibid.* 286.)

(*c*) Debent comburi seu igne cremari, ut patet in quadam constitutione Frederici, quae incipit *ut commissi* § *item mortis.* Et in alia constitutione ipsius, quae incipit, *inconsutile* § *contra tales.* (*Ibid.* 293.)

(*d*) *Expos. sacræ Scripturæ.* Scilicet historice, tropologice, allegorice et anagogice. Allegoria est credendorum, tropologia est amandorum, anagogia sperandorum. Unde sensui allegorico respondet Fides, sensui tropologico Charitas, sensui anagogico Spes. (*Ibid.* 284.)

APPENDIX P, p. 206.

On the Prohibition of Vernacular Scriptures.

The use of the vernacular Scriptures in the Medieval Church is a difficult subject, and sadly needs impartial investigation. Dr. Gasquet states (*O.E.B.*, 126–7) that "the many examinations, the records of which exist, reveal the fact that the followers of Wyclif could never have made any special point of their determination at all costs to have the sacred Scriptures in English." The absurdity of this statement may be judged from the following references (all official) which I have noticed in Foxe, most of which are instances of persecution for possession or reading. Foxe, iii. 539, 587–8, 595, 597, 599; iv. 134, 135, 178, 184,

186, 221, 223, 226, 229, 235, 237. Wyclif's statements of the activity of the friars against the Bible are explicit. *S.E.W.*, i. 209, iii. 393, 405 (both not by Wyclif himself). Matt., 10, 89, 255, 429–30. *Op. Evang.*, 158; *F.Z.*, 175. Trevelyan, 361, adds Arber, *Eng. Reprints* (†) (Sep. 1871), p. 172; Hunt, *Bath and Wells* (†), 140–6. See Knighton, ii. 313, for a case in 1392.

APPENDIX Q, p. 209.

The Derivation of Lollard.

Lollard, *i.e.* a wandering 'praise-God,' 'chanter,' or 'canter.' Cf. Ducange (quoting from Hocsemius, 1309): Quidam hypocritæ gyrovagi qui Lollardi sui deum-laudentes vocabantur per Hannoniam et Brabantiam quasdam mulieres nobiles deceperunt. From O. Du., *lollen* or *lullen*, to sing. Designedly confused with the M. E. *loller*, a loafer or idler, or even derived by a bad pun from the Latin *lolia*, tares. Cf. the title of the great collection of Lollard tracts, *Fasciculus Zizaniorum*, a Bundle of Tares. For other evidences of the continental origin of the name, see Mosheim, i. 676, and cf. Skeat, *Dict. Eng. Etym.*, *s.v.*

APPENDIX R, p. 210.

Wyclif's Sermons and Works at Lutterworth.

Wyclif's Latin sermons in their present form mostly date between 1382–4, though composed in some cases before. (See Lechler, 177 n. 4.) Vol. i. consists for the most part of models for the use of his "travelling preachers" (Loserth, *Sermons*, i. xvi.), and show that some, at anyrate, of his "poor priests" were men of education. Vol. ii. of his sermons is chiefly political. Loserth (*op. cit.* ii. p. xxi. points out the effect of this volume in Bohemia in the destruction of the most renowned churches, and cloisters and the murder of monks after the days of Aug. 1419). Most of his English sermons date also from this period; some were helps for his poor priests, as is evident from the directions at the end for applying the same; others were

short expositions of the lessons for his people. An admirable analysis is given of Wyclif's theory of homiletics, and efforts fo the reform of preaching, by Lechler, 176–87.

Wyclif's energy at Lutterworth is almost incredible. Several of his works (*e.g.* the *Trialogus*, the favourite hunting-ground for students of his latest views) were still unfinished at death. Nearly all Wyclif's English works must be ascribed to the last four years of his life, the major part after 1381. But how many of the seventy ascribed to him are genuine it is difficult to say. Arnold (*S.E.W.*, iii. p. xvii.-xx.) says 41; Matthew (*op. cit.*) adds a few more. For the Latin works we have as a good guide the list of books condemned, Wilkins, iii. 339-349. (For the *De Arte Sophistica* there quoted compare Shirley *Catalogue*, p. 53, with Poole *De Dom. Div.*, xxi. n.)

APPENDIX S, p. 211.

Wyclif's Citation to Rome.

Creighton and Rashdall, following Lechler, doubt this citation, and consider Wyclif's letter to be "a keenly ironical statement of his attitude towards the Papacy, thrown into the literary form of a confession of faith made to the Pope." But see *Polem. Lat. Works*, ii. 556—"Et sic dicit quidam debilis et claudus citatus ad hanc curiam quod prohibitio regia impedit ipsum ire, quia rex regum necessitat et vult efficitater quod non vadat," which may be a late added reference to this citation. No evidence of the citation yet found in the Vatican. I have quoted Wyclif's reply from the rough and expanded English translation made by his followers from the original in *F.Z.*, 341. See Matt., 504. Lechler 416, note by Lorimer.

APPENDIX T, p. 229.

The Sources for the Early Lollards.

For Repyngdon, Aston, and Hereford: see *F.Z.*, 289–333; Wilkins, iii. 157–171, 202, 204, 208–11; *Polem. Poems*, i. 262

(or *Mon. Francis.*; Appendix xi. 601); Wals., ii. 57, 65, 159; Thorpe in *Eng. Garner*, vi. 64.

For Repyngdon, see also *Ch. Quart. Rev.*, xix. 59–82 (the latter part somewhat conjectural), or Folkstone Williams, *Lives of the English Cardinals*, 1868, which adds nothing of value, and is not always correct.

For Hereford: add Knighton, ii. 170–4; Foxe, iii. 24–47, 87–9, 279; *F. and M.*, i., xvii.–viii.

For Purvey: *F.Z.*, 383–407; Knighton, ii. 178–9; *Eng. Garner*, vi. 62, 106; Wilkins (who calls him Purney throughout), iii. 260–3; *F. and M.*, i., xxv.–viii.; Foxe, iii. 257, 285–92.

For Swinderby: Knighton, ii. 189–98, who lived in the district, is our chief authority. Add also *F.Z.*, 334–40. Foxe, iii. 107–131, and Wals., ii. 55.

The sources for Badby will be found in Wilkins, iii. 325–8; Rymer, viii. 627; Foxe, iii. 235–8; Wals., ii. 282 (trans. in Capgrave, *Chron.*, 297); *Eulog.*, iii. 417; and *Chron. Lond.*, 92. See also Wylie, iii. 437–441, who accepts, however, the story that "as he spoke, a spider crossed his face, and he cried out promptly that the bread was worth less than even a spider or a toad, for they at least had life, but the bread was only dead matter." A different and harmless account is given in Wilkins, iii. 327. I see in it the animus of monks (Wals., ii. 282). Wylie compares Wyclif's declaration that it would be worth less than rats' bread or asses' bread (*Ch. Quart. Rev.*, xix. 63, where no authority is given for this statement). But compare *Sermons*, iii. 286; *De Apos.*, 172, 205, 206.

APPENDIX U, p. 237.

On the Writings of Purvey.

Purvey's commentary on the Apocalypse is said to have been published by Luther in 1528 with the title *Ante Centum Annos*, but without Purvey's name. See Wylie, iii. 312 n.

Purvey's *Remonstrance* was published (London, 1851) by Forshall. It contains the best short, and, on the whole, temperate,

exposition of Lollard doctrines that I know of, in many ways worthy of the learned translator or reviser of the Bible. Curious to say, I can find no reference in the *Remonstrance* to the translation, nor is there any protest concerning the forbidding the reading of the Scriptures, etc. But the Oxford constitutions were yet to come. On p. 133 there is a curious, half apologetic reference to Wyclif's "loss of speech": 'And though in hap he erred long, wittingly, and obstinately, almost all his life, and was very contrite in the end after loss of speech, which sudden repenting no mortal man knoweth.' Purvey adds to this enigmatical sentence: 'Therefore cease the blasphemous deeming of simonient prelates and uncunning in God's law to condemn a sovereign doctor whose books they cannot understand, nor read without great stumbling and default.'

APPENDIX V, p. 259.

On the Burning of Sawtre and the Act de Heretico Comburendo.

For Sawtre: *F.Z.*, 408-11 (Shirley's date, April 30, 1399, cannot be correct); Wilkins, iii. 254-66; Foxe, iii. 221-9. The *Dict. Nat. Biog.* is slight and inaccurate. For the Act, see *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 473, translated in Gee and Hardy, 133-7.

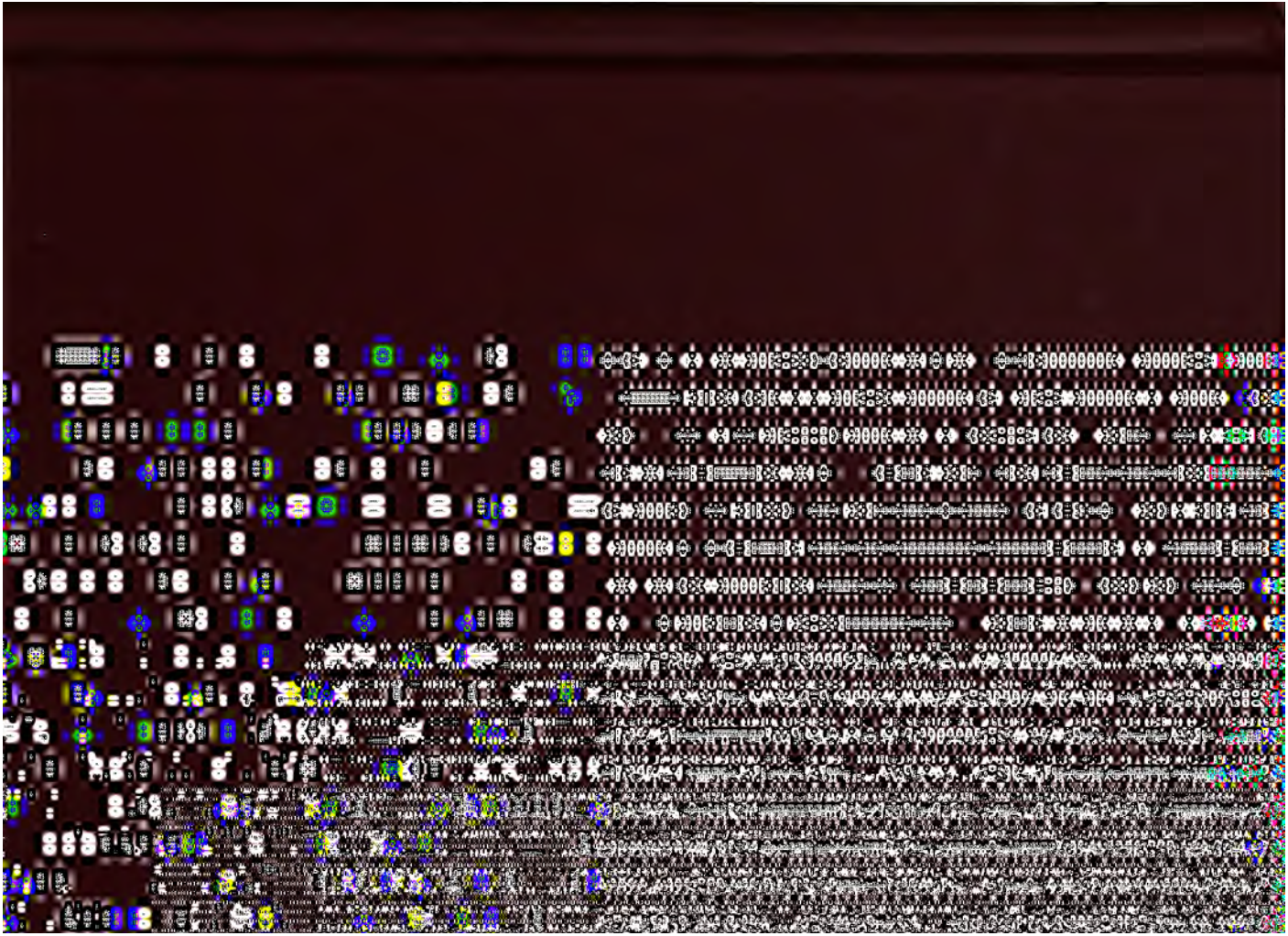
The burning of Sawtre raises several difficult questions. The date of the writ (February 26, 1401, see Gee and Hardy, 138-9; but not issued until March 2, Rymer, viii. 178), and of the Act (March 10, 1401) shows that Sawtre cannot have been burned (March 2) under statute law. Nor was he burnt under common law, for (Stubbs, iii. 370) this is the only known case of such a writ before the Act. Previous also to Sawtre, we only know of two cases of burning for heresy (Maitland, *Canon Law in C. of E.*, 79, 80, 158-79; *Chron. Melsa*, ii. 323, should be rejected. See Stubbs, ii. 492. Its acceptance by Arnold, *S.E.W.*, i., ix.-xii. vitiates his argument), of which the first is doubtful. Maitland has shown (*loc. cit.*) that Sawtre was therefore burnt under the canon law, namely under the successive bulls whereby the popes

had decreed that the edict of 1220 of Frederic II. should be enforced throughout the world. By this decree Frederic II. made the persecution of heresy a part of the public law of Europe, and in 1244 added the death penalty. (Lea: *Hist. Inq isition*, i. 32–5; Frederic's décree in Döberl, *Mon. Germ. Selecta*, v. 41. Cf. Lyndwood, 293, gloss ad v., *poenas in jure expressas*, see App. O (c), p. 302 *supra*). Shirley's idea (*F Z.*, lxix., endorsed by Green) of a "special Act" for Sawtre is contradicted by the dates.

Maitland's view is more harmonious with the other facts than that of Stubbs (iii. 33), who seems to speak of an informal Act—a petition of the clergy granted by the King with the assent of the Lords, while a "a petition of the Commons, conceived in shorter terms, but in the same sense, conveyed the assent of the lower house. It was then framed into a clause of the statute of the year." (*Rot. Parl.*, iii. 466–7, 473; Wilkins, iii. 252. Unfortunately the petitions are not dated.)

The later history of the statute *De Heret. Comb.* is of equal importance for the student. The power to punish heresy by burning—apart altogether from all statute laws, which had long since been repealed—was only expressly abolished in 1677. Nominally the Act was repealed in 1547 (1 Ed. VI. c. 12), and 1559 (1 Eliz. c. 1.), but burnings went on at intervals under royal writ, which had obtained the force of common law. (See the exhaustive discussion of the whole subject: Makower, *Constit. Hist. of Ch. Eng.*, pp. 185–94. For analysis and sources of all reputed burnings before Sawtre: *ibid.* 183 n. 1. For the procedure of the ecclesiastical courts in cases of heresy from 1401–1466, with sentences, etc., see *Ecclesiastical Courts Commission*, 1883, p. xxiv., and especially Appendix II., 53–69, by Stubbs. The list there given, however, is probably far from complete. See also Stubbs, iii. 377 n.

APPENDIX W, p. 262.

The Sources for Oldcastle.

The sources for Oldcastle are numerous and somewhat contradictory. The most important are:—*F.Z.*, 433–50 (the best